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Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the first part of its thirty-eighth session*

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Abbreviations

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
OAU	Organization of African Unity
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Tourism Organization

Chapter I
Organization of the session

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination held its organizational meeting (1st meeting) at United Nations Headquarters on 8 May 1998 and the first part of its thirty-eighth session at United Nations Headquarters from 1 to 26 June 1998. It held a total of 23 meetings and a number of informal consultations.

2. The Committee reviewed its working methods and procedures within the framework of its mandate and recommended some measures for their improvement. It also agreed that a number of functions within its terms of reference could be better performed, including: in reviewing the medium-term plan, the examination in the light of its budgetary implications of the totality of the Secretary-General's work programme; the assessment of the results achieved from current activities; the continuing validity of legislative decisions of more than five years' standing; the effectiveness of coordination; recommendation of an order of priorities among programmes; guidance to the Secretariat on programme design, by interpreting legislative intent, so as to assist in translating legislation into programmes; consideration and development of evaluation procedures and their use in the improvement of programme design; recommendations with respect to work programmes to give effect to legislative intent, taking into account the need to avoid overlapping and duplication; recommendation of guidelines for the United Nations system on their programme and activities; review and appraisal of the implementation of mandated programmes and activities.

3. The Committee observed that the Secretariat had not completely fulfilled its responsibilities under the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation pertaining to all functions of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Current inadequacies in the implementation of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation must be overcome in order for the Committee to carry out its functions fully.

4. The Committee made recommendations in this regard in the relevant sections of the report.

A. Agenda

5. The agenda for the thirty-eighth session, adopted by the Committee at its 1st meeting and revised at its 2nd meeting, is reproduced in annex I below.

6. At its organizational meeting, on 8 May 1998, the Committee, on the proposal of the representative of Austria, decided to include in its agenda for consideration during the first part of its thirty-eighth session the item entitled "Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate".

7. In view of the ongoing reform measures by the Secretary-General, which will lead to administrative and structural changes in the Organization, and on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to postpone to its thirty-ninth session consideration of the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General on the review of the efficiency of the

administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, as mandated in General Assembly resolution 45/254 A of 21 December 1990.

8. The Committee also decided to consider at its thirty-eighth session the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates" (A/51/946) and the comments by the Secretary-General thereon (A/52/685).

B. Election of officers

9. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 8 May and 1 June 1998, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairman:

Mr. Bagher Asadi (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Vice-Chairmen:

Mrs. Sharon Brennen-Haylock (Bahamas)
Mr. Valeric Tudor (Romania)
Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo (Uganda)

Rapporteur:

Mr. Thomas Schlesinger (Austria)

C. Attendance

10. The following States members of the Committee were represented:

Argentina
Austria
Bahamas
Brazil
Cameroon
China
Congo
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Egypt
France
Germany
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Italy
Japan
Mexico
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Pakistan
Poland
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Thailand
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uruguay
Zambia
Zimbabwe

11. One seat from the Group of Western European and Other States remains to be filled.

12. The following States Members of the United Nations were represented by observers:

Algeria
Australia
Bangladesh
Belarus
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Ecuador
Ghana
Hungary
India
Ireland
Jamaica
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Malaysia
Morocco
Namibia
New Zealand
Panama
Philippines
Saudi Arabia
Sweden
Tunisia
United Republic of Tanzania

13. The following regional commissions and specialized agencies were represented:

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Regional Commissions New York Office

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

14. The Under-Secretary-General for Management, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, the Controller and senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat and of the regional commissions participated in the work of the Committee. At the invitation of the Committee, Mr. Sumihiro Kuyama, Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit, also participated in the work of the Committee.

D. Documentation

15. The list of documents before the Committee at its thirty-eighth session is set out in annex II.

E. Adoption of the report of the Committee

16. At its 23rd meeting, on 26 June 1998, the Committee adopted the draft report on the work of the first part of its thirty-eighth session (E/AC.51/1998/L.7 and Add.1-30).

Chapter II
Programme questions

A. Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997

17. At its 19th and 20th meetings, on 16 and 17 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997 (A/53/122 and Add.1).

18. A representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

19. Concerns were expressed over the late submission of the report. It was recalled that in accordance with regulation 6.3 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, the programme performance report should have been submitted to all Member States by the end of the first quarter following the completion of the biennial budget period.

20. Appreciation was expressed regarding the quality of the report and its analytical approach to discerning the meaning of the vast amount of data collected. Appreciation was also expressed for the innovative approach by the Secretariat of reviewing the programme performance in the context of the medium-term plan. In that regard, it was stated that it would be useful if future programme performance reports included an analysis of the plan in force with clearer references to changes that were introduced in previous plans. The view was expressed that the criteria for performance rating was not clear; sometimes reference was made to the number of work-months, but the quality was not measured. In view of the continuous nature of most United Nations activities, the view was expressed that such an analysis could provide a better picture of the trends in the patterns of implementation over a number of years and might be used to project expected performance during the next medium-term plan, covering the period 2002–2005.

21. Views were expressed on the high overall rate of implementation of 80 per cent. The improvement in productivity was welcomed, particularly in the delivery of parliamentary services, and the programme managers and staff were commended on realizing a high rate of implementation during a period of profound change for the Organization, which was characterized by severe budgetary constraints and continuous reform efforts. The view was expressed that there was no evidence that the process of reform and restructuring had affected overall implementation in terms of quantity of outputs delivered during the period under consideration. However, concerns were expressed as well that implementation may have been achieved at the expense of quality and that the total number of outputs programmed had steadily declined over the period of the medium-term plan for the period 1992–1997. It was also stated that the report did not contain information that would confirm that view. In that regard, it was also noted that there were significant variations among programmes in terms of implementation. Concern was raised that some sections were given exceptional and preferential treatment regarding the reductions called for in General Assembly resolution 50/214 of 23 December 1995. The view was expressed that even in some sections that suffered from the resource constraints, equal treatment was not followed and priorities were shifted without informing the General Assembly and getting its prior

approval. Concerns were expressed regarding paragraph 16 of the report (A/53/122), which indicated that more than two thirds of terminated outputs occurred in the five regional commissions, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs combined.

22. Support was expressed for the proposal in paragraph 61 of the report to revisit the financial rules to ensure that they provide programme managers with the needed flexibility to enable them to discharge their responsibilities and that this should be accompanied by greater delegation of authority to manage the human as well as the financial resources. The view was expressed that the delegation of authority should be contingent on an effective system of internal control and programme oversight.

23. Concern was expressed on the termination of outputs as a result of the reductions in resources called for in General Assembly resolution 50/214. It was recalled that the Assembly, in part II, paragraph 6, of the resolution, had decided that the proposed savings would not affect the full implementation of mandated programme activities. The view was expressed that resource constraints were identified as the main cause of low performance rates, but the role of programme managers in producing performance rates was not examined. The view was expressed that the 14 per cent shortfall in implementation reported as a result of the savings measures reflected the direct impact only, and that the indirect effects were much higher if the vacancies resulting from resolution 50/214 were taken into consideration, and bearing in mind that 52 per cent of the non-implemented outputs fell under high-priority subprogrammes. The view was expressed that the savings measures had not been approved by the General Assembly but had been called for in resolution 50/214 pending the consideration and approval of the Secretary-General in his report on it, but nevertheless, the Secretary-General proceeded to implement the measures. The view was also expressed that the impact of savings measures seemed to have been concentrated in some budget sections. Some areas in the economic and social development sphere seemed to have suffered more than other areas of the budget. For example, as pointed out in paragraph 17 of the report, the five regional commissions accounted for 70 per cent of the outputs terminated as a result of resolution 50/214.

24. The view was expressed that the managerial and administrative reforms that had been under way for most of the biennium and that aimed at improving management by establishing a system of responsibility and accountability throughout the Organization could be expected to mitigate and in part offset the negative effects of the implementation of resolution 50/214.

25. Concern was voiced regarding the average vacancy rate of 13 per cent and the much higher rates in some sections, which far exceeded the 6.4 per cent rate approved by the General Assembly. There was acknowledgement that the high vacancy rates did not seem to have negatively affected programme performance. There was, however, concern about the use of vacant posts for consultancies and short-term appointments. The view was expressed that the practice of recruiting consultants was not an adequate remedy for lengthy and cumbersome recruitment procedures in the Organization. In view of this, it was also stated that productivity could be increased even further if the recruitment process and other cumbersome administrative procedures were streamlined and rationalized. In the context of these concerns, paragraph 22 of General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 was recalled.

26. Concerns were raised as to the shifting of priority from supply reduction to demand reduction and the low performance in the area of suppression of illicit traffic in section 14. There were queries regarding the assertions of the representative of the Secretary-General that the quality of programmes was affected by the savings measures, and the fact that those

measures were heavily concentrated on certain sections of the budget should be part of the findings and conclusions of the report.

27. Concern over increasing dependency on extrabudgetary resources to implement the regular programme of work was raised. The view was expressed that this practice could not be sustained in the long run, especially if there were substantial reductions in extrabudgetary funding in the future. The sharp decline in extrabudgetary resources, in particular for the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UNEP was noted with concern. The issue needed to be addressed to ensure predictable and secure sources of funding so that the mandated activities would not be affected in the future. The need to monitor carefully the volume and composition as well as the use of such resources to ensure that they supplemented and reinforced the purposes and objectives of mandated activities was emphasized. Concern was raised on the lack of centralized information on resources accruing from trust funds or technical cooperation funds and on the number of posts established against those funds.

28. Concern was raised, in reference to paragraph 58 (c) of the report, as to why resources were not redeployed to high-priority areas or subprogrammes to ensure that such high-priority programmes were fully implemented. It was also noted that departures from programmed commitments were not always fully justified in the report. The authority of the Secretariat to depart significantly from programmed activities approved by the General Assembly was also questioned.

29. The view was expressed that the methodology for reporting programme performance no longer met the needs of the Organization. It was stressed that the work of the United Nations, and its success in implementing mandates, could be derived through a more qualitative analysis of programme performance only.

30. Support was expressed for the observations on possible implications of the introduction of results-based budgeting on performance monitoring contained in paragraph 65 of the report. However, there was also concern that the reference to the concept of results-based budgeting in the report was rather premature, since it had not been discussed in the General Assembly.

31. The view was expressed that the use of professional work-months as an indicator of resource utilization was inadequate for demonstrating the overall picture of programme implementation, especially with respect to the use and flow of funds. Therefore, the next programme performance report should contain indicative figures on funds used under programmes that have been implemented.

32. As regards subregional cooperation, a question was raised about the selective approach to providing assistance to the Bangladesh-India-Myanmar-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation initiative, which should have been done through a representative regional organization.

Conclusions and recommendations

33. The Committee commended the efforts made to improve the quality of the report and to review performance within the context of the medium-term plan for the period 1992–1997. The Committee concluded that in future performance reports, more emphasis should be placed on qualitative analysis to reflect achievements in implementing programme activities.

34. The Committee recognized the need for effective systems at the intergovernmental and departmental levels to ensure that the activities correspond to the mandates reflected in the medium-term plan and programme budgets, as well as the need to monitor and

evaluate the quality of performance. In that regard, the Committee recommended to the General Assembly that the Secretary-General be requested to submit proposals for consideration by the Committee at its thirty-ninth session on ways in which full implementation as well as the quality of mandated programmes and activities could be ensured and could be better assessed by and reported to Member States.

35. The Committee noted that, during the biennium 1996–1997, there were constraints resulting from financial uncertainties as a result of the reduction in resources called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/214, the need to address new mandates and the challenging requirements of delivering mandated programmes while simultaneously reforming the structures and the methods of work.

36. The Committee expressed its concern over the high vacancy rate.

37. The Committee emphasized the importance of effective central information on extrabudgetary resources. The Committee expressed concerns that extrabudgetary resources were used to supplement activities that should be funded by the regular budget. The Committee noted that the non-availability of required extrabudgetary resources adversely affected programme delivery in certain areas.

38. The Committee noted that it was indicated in paragraph 62 of the report that 57 outputs carried over from the biennium 1994–1995 had been further postposed to the biennium 1998–1999. The Committee agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that it consider the issue in the context of its consideration of the programme performance report at its fifty-third session, based on information to be provided by the Secretariat, including information on reasons for the postponement and the opinion of relevant intergovernmental bodies on the Secretariat's proposal of the deletion.

39. The Committee concurred with the report findings regarding the need for more effective coordination at the departmental and organizational levels as a means of reducing overlap and duplication of programme activities. In view of this, the Committee recommended that overall coordination of the work of the Organization be undertaken when the programmes are formulated.

B. Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001

General recommendation

40. The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council and the competent Main Committees of the General Assembly particularly stress the consideration of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan which had not been submitted to the attention of sectoral and regional bodies. These were programmes 1, 3, 13, 18, 20, 24, 26 and 28.

Priority-setting within the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001

41. At its 12th meeting, on 11 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on priority-setting within the medium-term plan (A/53/134).

42. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report of the Secretary-General and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

43. Views were expressed on the importance of priority-setting. It was noted, however, that difficulties had been encountered over the years, in particular in terms of the breadth and scope of priorities, which, at times, have been all-encompassing. Nevertheless, it was considered important to ensure that priorities continued to be established as means of focusing on issues that Member States considered as requiring specific attention within the medium-term plan period. At the same time, it was noted that there were also difficulties with establishing priorities at the subprogramme level because of the new structure of the medium-term plan, whereby many subprogrammes now replaced previous programmes. Views were expressed that priorities should be established also for the short term, in the context of the budget outline, to guide the allocation of resources in the programme budget.

44. Views were expressed that priorities should be established only in the medium-term plan, which is a translation of mandates into programmes and serves as the principal policy directive of the Organization. Views were also expressed that resources should be commensurate with the mandates for their full implementation.

45. Views were expressed in support of the recommendation that priorities be established in the context of the Secretary-General's proposed budget outline, rather than the medium-term plan. It was considered that the budget outline was the logical place to include priorities because it provided direct guidance to the Secretary-General on resource allocation in his proposed programme budget. It was also considered that the two-year cycle of the budget outline made it easier to take into account the latest legislative developments, which may affect priorities.

46. Views were expressed that it was important to avoid having more than one set of priorities, which might be inconsistent and could send mixed signals to the Secretary-General.

47. Further views were expressed that priorities were dynamic and could only be changed by the legislative bodies, but, once established, they must be observed in the implementation of mandated programmes and activities.

Conclusions and recommendations

48. The Committee decided to recommend that priorities continue to be established in the medium-term plan, which is the principal policy directive of the United Nations. The priorities, as determined by the General Assembly in the medium-term plan, shall guide the allocation of resources in the subsequent programme budgets through the mechanisms provided for in General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986. The priorities contained in the budget outline should be in conformity with the priorities in the medium-term plan.

49. The Committee emphasized that priorities, once established by the General Assembly, cannot be changed or altered unless the Assembly decides otherwise.

Programme 1. Political affairs

50. At its 12th and 13th meetings, on 11 June 1998, the Committee considered revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 1, Political affairs.

51. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 1 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

52. Queries were raised on the proposed revision of subprogramme 1.1, Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, related to the role and designation of the Department of Political Affairs as the United Nations focal point for post-conflict peace-building. It was pointed out that the mandate of the subprogramme was also reflected in General Assembly resolutions 52/13 of 20 November 1997, entitled "Culture of peace" and 52/15 of the same date, entitled "Proclamation of the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace", and that those resolutions should be reflected at the end of the proposed paragraph 1.6 by adding the following phrase:

> "In this capacity, the Department of Political Affairs will promote a culture of peace and play an active role in the process of preparing a declaration and a programme of action on a culture of peace, including a programme of activities that will mark the year 2000: the International Year for the Culture of peace".

The view was further expressed that in the legislative mandate of subprogramme 1.1, Assembly resolutions 52/13 and 52/15 should be added.

53. Queries were raised on paragraph 1.19 on the role of subprogramme 1.4, Security Council affairs, related to research and the preparation of analytical studies on the application and interpretation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to the activities of the Council and its provisional rules of procedures. It was pointed out that while that activity was the prerogative of the Office of Legal Affairs, the programme narrative of both programme 1 and programme 27 included it as part of their objective. Similarly, in paragraph 1.24, under subprogramme 1.6 (new subprogramme 1.5), Decolonization, it was pointed out that references to the same activities were also included. Information was sought from the Secretariat, therefore, on the apparent duplication of functions.

54. Concern was expressed on the proposed deletion of General Assembly resolution 50/84 of 15 December 1995, entitled "Question of Palestine", as a legislative mandate for the programme. The view was expressed that while resolutions 52/49 of 9 December 1997, entitled "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People", and 52/50 of the same date, entitled "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat", provided the latest mandates for the subprogramme, they did not completely supersede the provisions of resolution 50/84, in which the activities called for were of a greater scope.

Conclusions and recommendations

55. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 1, Political affairs, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, subject to the following modifications:

(a) Restore General Assembly resolution 50/84 as a legislative mandate of subprogramme 1.7 (new subprogramme 1.6), Question of Palestine;

(b) Take note of the assurances by the Secretariat that consultations will be held with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, referred to in paragraph 5 of the proposed revisions to programme 1 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, on subprogramme 1.6, Decolonization;

(c) In the legislative mandate under subprogramme 1.4, Security Council affairs, add General Assembly resolutions 51/209 of 17 December 1996, entitled "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the

Strengthening of the Role of the Organization", and 52/161 of 15 December 1997, entitled "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization";

(d) In the legislative mandate under subprogramme 1.6 (new subprogramme 1.5), Decolonization, add General Assembly resolutions 51/209 and 52/161.

Programme 2. Peacekeeping operations

56. At its 12th meeting, on 11 June 1998, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 2, Peacekeeping operations.

57. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 2 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

58. Concern was expressed on the proposed revision to paragraph 2.18, which would replace "demining" with "mine action", since the term "mine action" denoted a wider scope of activities.

59. On new paragraph 2.22, it was noted that the language proposed emanated from the Ottawa Protocol, which had not been approved by the General Assembly, and that there was, therefore, no legislative mandate for the activities proposed. Attention was drawn to General Assembly resolution 52/173 of 18 December 1997, which clearly indicated the areas in which the United Nations could operate. The view was expressed that paragraph 2.22 should be reformulated or that references should be deleted to: "constructive dialogue with the international community at large", "information on technology", "advocacy in support of a global ban on landmines" and the "development and implementation of a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy". On the other hand, the view was expressed that the phrase "advocacy in support of a global ban on landmines; and the development and implementation of a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy" should be included in the programme narrative.

60. Attention was also drawn to the sensitive nature of landmines and to the great importance of demining in the activities of peacekeeping operations. It was noted with concern that the references to advocacy in support of a global ban on landmines had broad implications for the subject of landmines and had no mandate from the General Assembly, and that, therefore, those references should be deleted.

Conclusions and recommendations

61. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the proposed revisions to programme 2 of the medium-term plan subject to the following modifications:

(a) In the first sentence of paragraph 2.18, *after* demining *add* including mine action coordination

(b) Replace proposed new paragraph 2.22 with the following:

"2.22 Another objective of the subprogramme will be to ensure an effective, proactive and coordinated United Nations response throughout the Organization's humanitarian, social and economic assistance activities to mine infestation. This will be achieved through, *inter alia*, the establishment of the mine action service as the focal point within the United Nations system for mine-related

activities, namely, facilitation of a coherent and constructive dialogue between the United Nations and relevant actors on mine clearance, awareness and assistance; the collection, analysis and dissemination, through transparent and recognized sources, of mine-related information, including information on technology for mine clearance; the maintenance and promotion of technical and safety standards; advocacy to promote awareness of the serious threat that the indiscriminate use of landmines constitute to the safety, health and lives of the local population; and the development and implementation of a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy."

(c) Under legislative mandates:

(i) Under subprogramme 2.1:

Reinstate the reference to General Assembly resolution 49/233 on administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations so that the entry reads:

***Replace* General Assembly resolution 50/30 *with* 51/136 and 51/218**

***Add* the following resolution:**

52/173 Assistance in mine clearance

(ii) Under subprogrammes 2.2 and 2.3:

The entry *should read*:

***Replace* General Assembly resolutions 50/30 and 50/221 *with* 51/136, 51/218 and 51/239 A and B**

(iii) Under subprogramme 2.4:

The entry *should read*:

***Replace* General Assembly resolutions 50/30 and 50/221 *with* 51/136 and 51/218**

***Add* the following resolution:**

52/173 Assistance in mine clearance

Programme 3. Peaceful uses of outer space

62. At its 13th meeting, on 11 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it the proposals in respect of programme 3, Peaceful uses of outer space.

63. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 3 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

64. Assurances were requested that the consultations with the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space referred to in paragraph 4, would be undertaken.

Conclusions and recommendations

65. The Committee recommended approval of the revisions to programme 3, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.

Programme 13. International drug control

66. At its 13th meeting, on 11 June 1998, the Committee considered proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 13, International drug control.

67. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 13 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

68. The Committee noted that the proposed revisions did not yet reflect the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly devoted to countering the world drug problem together, and that the Secretariat would undertake a review of the effect of the outcome of the special session on programme 13 as well as on the programme of work for the biennium 1998–1999.

69. The Committee considered that in view of the priority given to the programme and the importance of the special session, revisions reflecting the outcome of the special session should be submitted to the Committee during the second part of its thirty-eighth session. The Committee therefore decided to defer the adoption of recommendations until the second part of its thirty-eighth session.

Programme 14. Economic and social development in Africa

70. At its 18th meeting, on 16 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it the proposals in respect of programme 14. Economic and social development in Africa.

71. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 14 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

72. Support for the proposed revisions was expressed. It was considered that the narrative of the two new subprogrammes was clear and had been drafted in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programming Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

73. Concern was expressed that the resources currently available to ECA were already insufficient and that the addition of the two new subprogrammes would further reduce the resources available for each subprogramme. Given the requirements of the African region, the view was expressed that it was necessary to provide ECA with adequate resources for carrying out its programme of work in accordance with the revised medium-term plan.

74. It was recalled that in its resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, the General Assembly decided that any savings realized during the biennium as a result of reform measures and efficiency gains from within ECA should be redeployed to the subregional centres.

75. Views were expressed that the current narrative of programme 14 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, including the proposed new subprogrammes, was not correctly formulated. It was emphasized that, as for the programmes of the other regional commissions, programme 14 should have included a sufficient number of subprogrammes so as to deal with all critical areas and priority concerns for African development. In this context, it was considered that the following issues should have received particular attention:

(a) The African Economic Community at the dawn of the third millennium: African competitivity and integration in the world economy;

(b) Strengthening of capacities: governance and management of development;

(c) Integration and regional cooperation;

(d) Raw materials, diversification of the African economy and sustainable human development;

(e) Research, mastering of technology, transport, communications and telecommunications in Africa;

(f) Popular participation in development: women, youth and civil society;

(g) Food, health, education, habitat and professional and vocational training;

(h) Trade and industry;

(i) Mobilization of resources and financing of development: debt reduction, internal resources, additional external resources and partnership;

(j) United Nations Special Initiative for the Implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa;

(k) Action programme for African least developed countries;

(l) Development and social justice;

(m) Cooperation with other regional commissions.

76. Views were expressed that the current narrative of programme 14 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 was well formulated by reducing its subprogrammes from 21 to 5. For this reason, the new programme structure for the present medium-term plan was adopted by the Committee two years ago.

77. Views were expressed that due account should be taken of the Committee's comments in the drafting of the future programmes of the medium-term plan of ECA.

78. The mandate of ECA in monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action was questioned. It was noted that this function was to be fulfilled by national Governments and coordinated by the Division for the Advancement of Women in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

79. The view was expressed that subprogramme 14.7 did not refer to cooperation with other subregional institutions. It was suggested that subregional entities like the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Arab Maghreb Union and others, as relevant, should be mentioned in the text of the subprogramme.

Conclusions and recommendations

80. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 14 of the medium-term plan.

81. At its 23rd meeting, on 26 June 1998, the Committee decided to request the Secretary-General to update programme 6: Africa New Agenda for Development, and to consider the proposed revisions at the second part of its thirty-eighth session.

Programme 15. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

82. At its 16th and 17th meetings, on 15 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it the proposals in respect of programme 15, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific.

83. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 15 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

84. Support for the proposed revisions was expressed. It was considered that the proposed revisions were formulated in conformity with the conference structure mandated by the Commission in its resolution 53/1 of 30 April 1997 and took into account global and regional developments, such as the current financial crisis. The decision to revise the programme structure by streamlining the existing subprogrammes from 10 to 7 in order to increase efficiency and optimize use of resources and, at the same time, to reflect activities to assist least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and countries with economies in transition in all the subprogrammes was welcomed. The general principles underlying regional cooperation, as well as the three themes of economic cooperation, sustainable development and poverty alleviation, were endorsed.

85. The view was expressed that the proposed revisions had expanded the objectives of ESCAP and did not reflect the Commission's recent mandate for priority setting. It was considered that the narrative of paragraphs 15.5 and 15.6 should have clearly indicated the relationship between the Committees and the subprogrammes.

86. The view was expressed that the activities of ESCAP related to landlocked countries should take into account the problems and needs of transit countries. Therefore it was expressed that in order to improve their transit infrastructure at the regional, subregional and interregional levels, financial and technical assistance should be provided to them. Another view was expressed, and attention was drawn to the mandates contained in General Assembly resolution 52/19 of 21 November 1997 entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization".

87. The integration of the gender perspective in all areas of work, in compliance with the directives of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, was welcomed. However, the view was expressed that a specific objective on gender mainstreaming should have been included in subprogramme 15.3, Social development.

88. The view was also expressed that there should have been an explicit reference in paragraph 15.4 to coordination with the United Nations funds and programmes and the Bretton Woods institutions.

89. The mandate for paragraph 15.9 (f) was questioned. The Committee was informed that this paragraph reflected the result of the objectives described in paragraphs 15.14 (c) and (d) of the proposed revisions.

90. Concern was expressed that the merger into one of the two subprogrammes "Regional economic cooperation: trade and investment" and "Regional economic cooperation: industry and technology" should not undermine the importance of technology transfer to developing countries.

91. It was noted that the words "the region's dynamic growth" in the last sentence of paragraph 15.10, were no longer accurate in view of the current economic crisis in the

region. It was also emphasized that the recent financial crisis should be given priority attention in subprogramme 15.2, Development research and policy analysis.

92. Paragraph 15.12 was welcomed, in particular as regards the sharing of experiences among member countries of the region.

93. The view was expressed that the text in paragraphs 15.8 and 15.12 to 15.15 should be modified so as to reflect more accurately the recent mandates adopted by the Commission.

Conclusions and recommendations

94. The Committee recommended approval of the revisions to programme 15 of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modification:

Paragraph 15.15 (d)

***Insert* and cooperation *after* partnership**

Programme 16. Economic development in Europe

95. At its 17th meeting, on 15 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 16, Economic development in Europe.

96. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 16 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

97. Appreciation was expressed for the proposed revisions, which fully reflected both the ministerial Declaration on the Strengthening of the Economic Cooperation in Europe, adopted in 1997, as well as the ECE Plan of Action. However, it was pointed out that, in the introductory paragraphs of the proposed revisions to programme 16, the so-called "sunset"clause was mentioned. Regret was expressed that such mention was made in a United Nations document by the Secretariat, while the General Assembly itself was still involved in discussing the issue and had yet to decide thereon.

98. Clarification was sought regarding the mandate for the reference to time-frame and sunset clauses. The Committee was informed that these concepts were introduced in the reform package adopted by the Commission and apply only to the ad hoc groups of governmental experts that are established for a two-year period with a precise programme of work. This category of intergovernmental body facilitates the rotation of activities within the mandate and areas of expertise of ECE. At the end of the two-year period, new requests from member States can thus be addressed through the establishment of new ad hoc groups of experts, while not inflating the intergovernmental structure of the Commission.

99. In response to a question on the type of cooperation between European and North African States, the Committee was informed that a general concern of ECE was to make its integration tools (mainly norms and standards) available to countries outside the region, notably the Mediterranean countries (both Middle East and North African). For example, some ECE norms and conventions in the field of transport had been adopted by a number of those countries. ECE also cooperates with them in the fields of trade facilitation and energy (gas). In addition, ECE, jointly with ECA, is responsible for the implementation of the Economic and Social Council resolution on the Europe-Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar.

Conclusions and recommendations

100. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 16 of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modification:

Paragraph 16.1

In the first sentence, *replace* European *with* member.

Programme 17. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

101. At its 17th meeting, on 15 June 1998, the Committee considered proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 17, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

102. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 17 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

103. The revisions proposed under the programme, regarding mainstreaming gender issues, were endorsed. It was stated that they were of great importance to the region and that they were consistent with the mandates from the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

104. Clarification was sought as to the reason for not submitting additional revisions to programme 17 and for not reviewing the legislative mandates in all subprogrammes. The Committee was informed that, regardless of the impact on regional economic growth of current events, such as the unfolding Asian crisis or the effect of the warming current of El Niño, the issues addressed by each of the subprogrammes remained unchanged, and that the specific implications of such events would be more practically referred to in the next programme budget proposal. The Committee was also informed that the Secretariat maintained an active database on legislative mandates, which was constantly updated to ensure its relevance to all subprogrammes.

Conclusions and recommendations

105. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 17 of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modification:

The last sentence of paragraph 17.25 (c) *should read*

Inter-agency coordination on gender issues, in particular with the organs, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system that are active in the region, will be strengthened.

Programme 18. Economic and social development in Western Asia

106. At its 17th meeting, on 15 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 18, Economic and social development in Western Asia.

107. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the revisions to programme 18 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

108. It was pointed out that, in the absence of the consideration of the proposed revisions by the Commission, an ad hoc mechanism for the review of these revisions should have been established. The Committee was informed that the views of the member States of the Commission on the revisions would be sought in the context of the report on the activities of the Commission that is dispatched to them in the years when the Commission does not meet.

109. The view was expressed that the meaning of the terminology proposed to be used in paragraph 18.12 (a) (gender-sensitive demographic analysis) and in paragraph 18.13 (a) (feminization of poverty) needed to be clarified. The Committee was informed that the terminology "feminization of poverty" was used in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and that the words "gender-sensitive" before "demographic analysis" meant that the demographic analysis to be carried out by ESCWA would include gender variables.

Conclusions and recommendations

110. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 18 of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modifications:

Paragraph 18.12 (a)

Replace **gender-sensitive demographic analysis** ***with*** **demographic analysis, including gender variables**

Paragraph 18.13 (a)

Replace **feminization of poverty** ***with*** **increasing impact of poverty on women**

Programme 20. Humanitarian assistance

111. At its 13th meeting, on 11 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it the proposal in respect of programme 20, Humanitarian assistance.

112. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 20, Humanitarian assistance, and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

113. It was recalled that, in accordance with resolutions 52/12 B of 19 December 1997 and 52/220 of 22 December 1997, the operational demining activities as well as the Mine Clearance Unit were transferred to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and that the humanitarian mine-clearance activities should be conducted under the responsibility of the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator. It was also noted that, for the same reasons, the disaster management training programme was transferred to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

114. The view was expressed that the proposed continuation beyond the year 1999 under subprogramme 20.3, Natural disaster reduction, of activities related to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction was not justified, taking into account that the responsibility for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness was transferred to UNDP under the terms of resolution 52/12 B and that the Decade itself was ending in 1999. Other views were expressed in support of the revised objectives of subprogramme 20.3. In that context it was stated that by its resolutions 51/185 of 16 December 1996 and

52/200 of 18 December 1997, the General Assembly had already emphasized the need for the continuation of a concerted and coordinated international effort to prevent, mitigate and rehabilitate damage caused by natural disasters.

Conclusions and recommendations

115. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 20, Humanitarian affairs, of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modifications:

***Replace* paragraph 20.2 *with* the following:**

20.2 The overall orientation of the programme is to ensure the timely, coherent and coordinated response of the international community to disasters and emergencies, including through effective use of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee; to promote natural disaster reduction in the context of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction; to facilitate the elaboration of policies to guide the work of the humanitarian community, including, *inter alia*, the linkages between emergency relief, rehabilitation and development; and to advocate guiding principles of humanitarian assistance.

***Add* subparagraph 20.4 (a) *bis* as follows:**

(a) *bis*. To serve as a joint secretariat for the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, ensuring an effective exchange of information and a process of consultation between the two Committees;

***Replace* subparagraph 20.4 (b) *with* the following:**

(b) To promote the formulation and/or refinement of policy on access to and protection of victims of conflict; United Nations system responsibilities for internally displaced persons; the humanitarian interface with peacekeeping operations; security for humanitarian staff and supplies in conflict situations; the linkage between humanitarian action and the early commencement of post-conflict reintegration, reconstruction and rehabilitation activities; principles of engagement, suspension and disengagement for humanitarian agencies in the field; and other humanitarian issues that fall between gaps in existing mandates of agencies;

***Add* subparagraph 20.4 (b) *bis* as follows:**

(b) *bis*. To encourage increased joint programming and prioritizing of humanitarian action among agencies at the field level, thus enhancing the consolidated appeals process;

***Replace* paragraph 20.8 *with* the following:**

20.8 The Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation, in particular its Plan of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction held at Yokohama, Japan, from 23 to 27 May 1994, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, calls for reducing the vulnerability of populations at risk from natural disasters and similar emergencies through the integration of disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation into development planning at the local, regional and national levels. While the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, proclaimed by

the Assembly in its resolution 44/236 of 22 December 1989, is coming to an end in 1999, the need for a continuation in the future of a concerted and coordinated international effort to prevent, mitigate and rehabilitate the damage caused by natural disasters has been recognized by the Assembly in its resolutions 51/185 of 16 December 1996 and 52/200 of 18 December 1997. In this respect decisions are to be taken by the Assembly on the division of responsibilities within the United Nations system on that coordination. Responsibilities for operational activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness shall be undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme in accordance with Assembly resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997.

Replace **paragraph 20.9** ***with*** **the following:**

20.9 Subject to the outcome of the end of the Decade review to be carried out by the General Assembly, the objectives of the subprogramme in the interim, through 31 December 1999, which would be pursued within a coordinated and concerted inter-agency approach, would be to promote:

Replace **subparagraph 20.9 (b)** ***with*** **the following:**

(b) Policy commitment and necessary technical support for disaster reduction practices, including through the appropriate application of science and technology at the country and regional levels;

Replace **subparagraph 20.9 (d)** ***with*** **the following:**

(d) Community involvement in the planning and implementation of disaster reduction measures.

Programme 23. Public information

116. At its 13th meeting, on 11 June 1998, the Committee considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 23, Public information.

117. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 23 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

118. It was noted that, as information activities influenced the life of people everywhere, an accurate understanding of the work of the United Nations was important. Views were also expressed in support of the reorientation of the Department of Public Information.

119. While underscoring the importance of public information activities, members expressed the view that the proposed revisions should have included information activities concerning international cooperation, international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, environment and drugs. Further, the view was expressed that, as the focal point for information activities within the United Nations system, the Department of Public Information should be strengthened and that a strong information structure should be devised. Support was expressed for a stronger communication strategy to be devised by the Department and the need to strengthen the ties between the Department and substantive bodies within the Organization.

120. Regarding paragraph 23.10, it was pointed out that there existed a procedure through which the Economic and Social Council recognized representative groups of civil society, such as non-governmental organizations, by giving them consultative status to become

actively engaged with the United Nations. It was suggested that it would be more appropriate to refer to the representative groups of civil society as major groups, so that such groups would be able to engage with the United Nations without having a consultative status with the Council.

121. Members expressed the view that electronic communication provided an effective means of communication and played an important role in information collection and dissemination. While the increased use of electronic communication was supported, concerns were expressed that there existed a considerable technological gap between Member States. It was, therefore, emphasized that other forms of media, such as radio, print and television, should be given equal importance. It was further pointed out that, while the use of electronic media was increasing, the more traditional means for the dissemination of information should continue to be used in view of the technological gap between Member States. It was also pointed out that ways and means for developing a United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity for direct communication with United Nations constituencies should be explored.

122. Great importance was attached to the role of United Nations information centres in disseminating information at the local and regional levels.

Conclusions and recommendations

123. The Committee welcomed the development of digital technology, computerization and the Internet, and recommended that traditional media – print, radio and television – should continue to receive high priority to ensure outreach to all countries, in particular developing countries.

124. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the proposed revisions to programme 23, Public information, of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In the first sentence of paragraph 23.2, *insert* and General Assembly resolutions 52/12 A of 12 November 1997 and 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, *after* (A/51/950);

(b) Add old paragraph 23.7 as paragraph 23.7 (bis) *after* new paragraph 23.7;

(c) In the first sentence of paragraph 23.8, *replace* common system *with* United Nations system;

(d) At the end of paragraph 23.8, *add* and the views of the host Governments;

(e) In paragraph 23.13, *replace* celebrities *with* outstanding personalities.

125. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly invite the Secretary-General to conduct a review, in consultation with the host Governments, of the effectiveness of the functioning of the United Nations information centres, including those already integrated with other United Nations offices.

Programme 24. Management and central support services

126. At its 15th meeting, on 12 June 1998, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 24, Management and central support services.

127. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 24 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

128. The view was expressed that emphasis should be placed on management in the proposed revisions to programme 24. The view was expressed that the nomenclature of the Secretariat was an internal matter and should not have been reflected in the proposed revision to the medium-term plan. Doubts were expressed on the proposed revision of the title of the programme from "Administrative services" to "Management and central support services". It was pointed out that public administration was an important aspect of public policy and that, therefore, administration should be undertaken in conjunction with management. On that basis, the view was expressed that the current title of Department of Administration and Management should be retained. The view was expressed that for an intergovernmental organization like the United Nations, the administration is central to its effective and efficient functioning and, therefore, there was no reason to change the name of the Department of Administration and Management to the Department of Management. It was stated that the Department of Management is the nomenclature normally used in the private sector, and that it was dangerous to view the United Nations from the lenses of a corporate company. There were concerns expressed as to which department would now be responsible for administration. The view was expressed that there was need to review the decision in the future to rename the department. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the proposed revisions accurately reflected the provisions of General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 and that the new structure of the programme, as well as the Department, would contribute to better management in the Organization.

129. In connection with the proposed revision contained in paragraphs 24.2 and 24.7, it was stressed that the Secretariat, in seeking to achieve the objectives of the programme, should ensure that those objectives were achieved according to the guidelines established by the General Assembly and resolutions of legislative bodies and on the basis of existing rules and regulations. Accordingly, the related references should be added after each of the proposals.

130. The view was expressed that support should be given to the proposed new paragraph 24.5. The view was expressed that the delegation of authority of operational functions to programme managers would ensure that programme managers would have overall responsibility for the activities under their responsibility. It was emphasized, however, that such delegation should be accompanied by clear accountability; otherwise, compliance to General Assembly resolutions and existing rules and regulations would be endangered. The view was expressed that performance indicators, as well as the related follow-up actions, were important.

131. The view was expressed that the mandate for the establishment of the Management Policy Committee was questionable. Queries were also raised about how management reform would be carried out evenly across the Secretariat. It was expressed, in that context, that Secretariat reform should be fully in accordance with the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

132. The view was expressed that the establishment of an Oversight Support Unit in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management was important. Some doubts were expressed, however, as to whether the location of the Unit should be in the Department of Management or in the Office of the Secretary-General.

133. In connection with the proposed revisions to paragraph 24.8 (new paragraph 24.12), it was pointed out that the proposed new paragraph 24.12 (b) reflected a major deviation from the approved medium-term plan, since the proposed revision would empower the Department of Management to decide on any appeal by staff members against an

administrative decision or against disciplinary action, instead of the existing arrangement whereby it advises the Secretary-General on those matters. The view was expressed that the existing text of the medium-term plan as approved by the General Assembly should be maintained.

Conclusions and recommendations

134. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the proposed revisions to programme 24, Management and central support services, subject to the following modifications:

(a) Replace the first sentence of paragraph 24. 2 with the following:

The Secretariat seeks to achieve those objectives, with full respect for the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly, by:

(b) In the first sentence of new paragraph 24.7, *after* cost-effectiveness *insert* and the relevant decisions of the General Assembly thereon;

(c) In new paragraph 24.8 (c), *after* communications and *insert* transparent;

(d) In paragraph 24.8 (d):

(i) *Replace* lead *with* develop

(ii) At the end of the sentence *add* with full respect for the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly;

(e) At the end of paragraph 24.8 (g), *add* with full respect for the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly.

(f) Retain the existing text of subparagraph 24.8 (b) in the approved medium-term plan, instead of the proposed new paragraph 24.12 (b).

135. The Committee also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the revisions to programme 24 be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Programme 26. Disarmament

136. At its 16th and 17th meetings, on 15 June 1998, the Committee considered proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 26, Disarmament.

137. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 26 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

138. The importance of the programme was emphasized and support was expressed for the re-establishment of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. In view of the important role that the Department would play in the promotion of international peace and security, regret was expressed that the proposed revisions to programme 26 contained only minimal changes. The view was expressed that the Department for Disarmament Affairs had been established to respond more effectively to the priorities of the Member States in various aspects of the area of disarmament and that, therefore, the new Department should be fully prepared to react to the wishes of Member States. Views were expressed that attention should be drawn to recent developments in the international arena related to the questions of nuclear non-

proliferation and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament, which might require the Department to devote even greater attention to its work in that field.

139. Appreciation was expressed for the role of the regional centres in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and on the emphasis placed by the Department on the important role that those centres were likely to take on in the area of disarmament.

140. It was pointed out that the mandate of the Department was contained in General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997. At this stage, there was no need to change the mandate of the Department. The view was expressed that the report of the Secretary-General (A/52/303) referred to in General Assembly resolution 52/220 did not accurately reflect the existing structure of the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

141. Views were expressed that the activities currently undertaken under programme 26, Disarmament, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/39 B of 9 December 1997 should be transferred to programme 1, Political affairs.

142. Concern was expressed about the emphasis placed on the issues of small arms and light weapons and on the proposed assistance to affected States in the consolidation of peace through "practical" disarmament measures. The view was expressed that the assistance referred to would be in the area of small arms and that the increasing importance placed on small arms and light weapons should not be at the expense of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. Queries were raised as to how it was decided whether a disarmament measure was practical or not. The view was expressed that there was no mandate for the narrative proposed in paragraph 26.5 of the revisions. Others welcomed and supported the concepts expressed in the proposed revision. The view was expressed that the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons reaffirmed the need to carry out the systematic and progressive efforts towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It was emphasized that priorities could not be revised if no agreement was reached among Member States. In this connection the view was expressed that the elimination of nuclear weapons was the first priority for the United Nations in the field of disarmament, in accordance with the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, of 1978, which had the consensus of the Member States of the Organization.

143. On the proposed revisions to existing paragraph 26.5, which have been incorporated into the new paragraph 26.6, objections were raised as to the inclusion, in the third sentence of the paragraph, of the phrase "in particular on issues commanding political consensus among Member States".

144. On the legislative mandates of the programme, attention was drawn to the selective interpretation by the Secretariat of the mandates of the programme, in particular by making references to parts of General Assembly resolution 52/38 of 9 December 1997, instead of including the entire resolution. The need to read resolutions in a comprehensive way was emphasized and the Secretariat was requested to ensure a more objective and transparent rendering of those resolutions. Objections were raised to the proposed deletion of references to General Assembly resolutions 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 entitled Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, and resolution 50/76 of 12 December 1995, entitled Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, since those resolutions provided important mandates for the programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

145. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 26 of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modifications:

(a) Delete the revisions to paragraphs 26.4, 26.5 and 26.6;

(b) Under Legislative mandates:

(i) Retain General Assembly resolutions 2992 (XXVII) and 50/76, proposed for deletion;

(ii) Under "*Replace* the following resolutions", *for* 37/99, 46/36 and 50/70 with 52/38 *read* 37/99, 42/45, 46/36 and 50/70 with 52/38;

(iii) Under "*Replace* the following resolutions" *delete* 42/45 with 52/38 D;

(iv) Under "*Add* the following resolutions", *delete* the references to the following parts of General Assembly resolution 52/38:

52/38 A	**Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**
52/38 B and R	**Transparency in armaments**
52/38 C	**Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them**
52/38 G	**Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures**
52/38 J	**Small arms**
52/38 S	**Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia**

(v) Under "*Add* the following resolutions" *insert*

52/220, annex III	**Changes to be made in the programme narrative contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "United Nations reform: measures and proposals"**

146. The Committee further recommended that existing paragraph 26.2 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996, should be revised by adding, after the word "support", the phrase "at Geneva and substantive secretariat support at Headquarters".

Programme 27. General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference services

147. At its 16th meeting, on 15 June 1998, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. The Committee had before it the proposals in respect of programme 27, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference services.

148. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 27 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

149. The proposed revisions were generally supported in view of the work undertaken by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the efforts demonstrated in improving its work. The view was expressed that the narrative in

paragraph 27.8 duplicated that of paragraph 27.6, which already covered the technical servicing of organs and subsidiary organs. The concern was expressed that the narrative in paragraph 27.8 also duplicated the narrative of section 2B, Disarmament, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999, as approved by the General Assembly in annex III to its resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, entitled "Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999". The view was also expressed that a certain overlap and duplication of functions existed between programmes and that this particular programme seemed to be without an identity – a programme that includes political, economic and service activities without concentrating on any one of them. Consequently, while the programme may have been set up with the best of intentions, in practice it might not reflect the best course of action for the Organization. There were suggestions that the Committee recommend that the Office of Internal Oversight Services and/or the Joint Inspection Unit undertake a study on the reform in order to determine whether its method of implementation was best for the Organization.

150. Queries were also raised on paragraph 27.10 on the role of the programme as it related to conducting research and preparing analytical studies on the application and interpretation of the provisions of relevant articles of the Charter of the United Nations. In connection with paragraph 27.11, assurances were requested from the Secretariat for the timely issuance of documentation and on strict compliance with the six-week rule for submission of documentation to legislative bodies. In that context, appreciation was expressed on steps being taken by the Department, in coordination with other offices and departments, to ensure compliance with the requirements for the timely issuance of documentation.

151. The view was expressed that the General Assembly attached serious importance to the implementation of its resolutions and decisions, and therefore the current mechanism for the timely action by relevant Secretariat bodies should be strengthened and made more effective.

152. The view was expressed that the development of new conference servicing policies, as mentioned in paragraph 27.14 (b), was the prerogative of the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

153. Grave concern was expressed at the proposed deletion of "all six official languages" in paragraph 27.16 (a). It was stressed that the six official languages should be given equal treatment, as requested in part B of General Assembly resolution 52/214 of 22 December 1997. The Committee's attention was drawn to significant errors in the translation of the text of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, which in most instances were not merely editorial, but which affected the substance of the narrative. It was pointed out that already-approved texts of reports and resolutions were the subject of lengthy efforts during deliberations by Member States and that efforts should be made towards strict utilization of existing negotiated texts in the language versions.

154. Regarding paragraph 27.19, the view was expressed that while the application of advanced electronic information management and communication technology was important, the more traditional form of documentation should be given equal importance.

Conclusions and recommendations

155. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the proposed revisions to programme 27, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference services, subject to the following modifications.

Paragraph 27.6

After **Indian Ocean** *add* **as well as meetings of States parties and other international meetings related to multilateral disarmament agreements;**

Paragraph 27.8

Delete the paragraph.

Paragraph 27.12

After **implementation of,** *delete* **all**

Subparagraph 27.16 (a)

Insert **in all six official languages of the United Nations** *after* **produced**

Delete **is of high quality and**

156. The Committee also recommended to the General Assembly that in the year 2002, programme 27, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference services, be subject to evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services for consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-second session.

Programme 28. Economic and social affairs

157. At its 14th and 15th meetings, on 12 June 1998, the Committee considered revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It had before it the proposal in respect of programme 28, Economic and social affairs.

158. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the proposal and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

159. The view was expressed that the United Nations played a unique role in international cooperation for development and that development should remain at the forefront of its agenda. This overriding priority must be fully reflected in the medium-term plan.

160. The view was expressed that in addressing economic, social and environmental issues, the Secretariat should maintain a balanced approach in accordance with the priorities identified by the relevant bodies of the United Nations.

161. The view was expressed that in line with the outcome of recent major international conferences on development, including the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on Agenda 21, the United Nations should play an important role on cross-sectoral issues such as mobilization of financial resources, technology transfer, technical assistance, capacity-building, dissemination of data, exchange of experiences, etc. Therefore, the Secretariat should take the steps necessary to fully integrate such policies and activities in its work and undertake the coordination role required in that regard.

162. The view was expressed that it was necessary to elaborate further on the manner in which the Secretariat intended to improve system-wide coordination, which is crucial for the success of the process of implementing and delivering programmes in a comprehensive manner. A further view was expressed concerning the need to ensure adequate coordination of technical cooperation activities, which should remain one of the priorities of the new Department, and to elaborate further on the issue of the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the

General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences, which had not been adequately treated in the proposed narrative of programme 28.

163. The view was expressed that in paragraph 28.4 of the proposed revisions, reference should be made to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat); in paragraph 28.5, the references to the normative work and to the standard-setting role of the Secretariat needed to be elaborated further; and in paragraph 28.6, the reference to the policy management function of the Economic and Social Council should be reviewed since it could lead to misinterpretation of the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations in terms of conflicting with the policy-making role of the General Assembly.

164. The view was expressed that the narratives of various subprogrammes were not consistent since some subprogrammes described objectives and others listed activities. While the overall objectives presented in paragraph 28.5 were endorsed, it was felt that their achievement would be difficult to measure in the absence of performance indicators.

165. Concern was expressed about the reduction of the total number of subprogrammes from the original 10 in programmes 5, 7 and 8 to 8 under programme 28. It was felt that this reduction might have negative effects on the implementation of the existing mandates. More specifically, it was considered that the consolidation of former subprogrammes 7.4, 8.1 and 8.2 into, as relevant, the new subprogrammes 28.3, 28.4 and 28.8 resulted in a dilution of the distinct identity of the objectives contained in the approved medium-term plan. The Committee received details showing that all the mandates and objectives of the former subprogrammes had been maintained in the relevant subprogrammes of programme 28. It was emphasized that the establishment of a single departmental structure rationalized the distribution of responsibilities for specific mandates and better grouped human resources so as to improve the overall delivery of the programme. It further provided closer links among analytical, policy and operational activities.

166. Concern was expressed as to whether the proposed revisions had been reviewed by the appropriate intergovernmental bodies. The Committee was informed that, at the time of the meetings of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council relevant to the programme, the present revisions had not then been finalized. However, extensive explanations regarding the rationale for the consolidation of the three departments had been provided to those bodies. Their views as to the effect of the changes on the implementation of the individual subprogrammes had also been sought.

167. Emphasis was placed on the need for the Department to pay particular attention to the special needs of Africa, the least developed countries, small island developing States and South-South cooperation, as discussed in paragraph 28.3. In that connection it was recalled that, while there were no specific subprogrammes dealing with those issues within programme 28, programme 6 of the medium-term plan dealt with the New Agenda for Development of Africa, and concerns for Africa, the least developed countries, small island developing States and South-South cooperation were addressed in each subprogramme.

168. The view was expressed that the issues of coordination and collaboration with United Nations funds and programmes, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, should be clearly included where warranted, particularly under subprogrammes 28.3, 28.4 and 28.8. It was emphasized that such coordination and collaboration should be carried out in accordance with the mandates of those organs.

169. Concern was expressed about the non-inclusion of the issue of external debt in programme 28. It was indicated to the Committee that UNCTAD served as the focal point for this issue. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs would continue to collaborate

with UNCTAD in this important area, particularly as a part of its work on the issue of the financing of development.

170. The view was expressed that the Department should address the issue of the recent financial turmoil in Asia, particularly with the view of enhancing the understanding of policy makers to cope with such phenomena in the future.

171. It was observed that the concepts of "civil society" and "best practices" should be better defined. In that context it was suggested that "good practices" would be a more appropriate wording than "best practices".

172. It was also observed that the references to the main legislative mandates for the programme in paragraph 28.4 could be further expanded by reference to other relevant United Nations bodies and conferences.

173. It was suggested that informal briefings be organized regularly for interested delegations by the programme managers of the Department.

Conclusions and recommendations

174. The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly consider possible arrangements for the establishment of a programme and/or subprogramme in the medium-term plan on post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction as well as on the transition from relief to development.

175. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 28 of the medium-term plan, with the following modifications:

Paragraph 28.1

Replace **provide policy guidance** ***with*** **provide support for policy development**

Paragraph 28.3

After **In implementing the programme, particular attention will be paid to** ***add*** **the effective and coordinated implementation of Agenda 21, taking into account the outcome of the 1997 Special Session of the General Assembly, as well as**

Paragraph 28.5 (c)

Replace the paragraph with the following:

> **(c) Promoted the implementation of agreed plans, strategies, programmes or platforms for action, including the outcome of United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related areas, and monitored, as appropriate, the implementation of agreed plans, strategies, programmes or platforms for action for which the Department is responsible for assisting intergovernmental follow-up and review processes**

Paragraph 28.5 (e)

After **regional** ***insert*** **subregional**

Paragraph 28.5 (f)

After **aimed at** ***insert*** **the promotion of**

After **sustained economic growth and sustainable development** ***insert*** **in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences, at the request of Governments and in accordance with their national policies,**

Paragraph 28.5 (h)

Replace **arrangements** ***with*** **cooperation**

Paragraph 28.5 (i)

Replace **including** ***with*** **especially**

Paragraph 28.6

Replace **macroeconomic policy coordination dialogue** ***with*** **policy dialogue on macroeconomic issues**

Paragraph 28.6 (d)

At the end of the first sentence, ***add*** **consistent with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and taking into account the role and the mandates of the executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes**

Paragraph 28.6 (e)

At the end of the paragraph ***add*** **and of the Agenda for Development**

Paragraph 28.7

At the end of the paragraph, ***add*** **consistent with the Declaration and Platform for Action of the Beijing Conference**

Paragraph 28.8 (c)

Replace the paragraph with the following:

> **28.8 (c) To contribute to the development and strengthening of human rights mechanisms dealing specifically with women's human rights, including the provision of technical support for the working group on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or the increased use of existing mechanisms, in particular in the context of the coordination and follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

Paragraph 28.11

Replace **as well as the resolutions and decisions of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development and the Committee on Natural Resources** ***with*** **as well as the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council on the recommendation of bodies responsible for energy and natural resources**

Paragraphs 28.13 (b) and (c)

Merge the two paragraphs by making paragraph 28.13 (c) the last sentence of paragraph 28.13 (b), and reletter the subsequent paragraphs accordingly

Paragraph 28.13 (f)

In the last sentence, after **General Assembly** ***insert*** **and the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development**

Renumber **revised paragraph 28.13 (f) as 28.12, and** ***renumber*** **the subsequent paragraphs accordingly**

Paragraph 28.13 (h)

After **To support** ***insert*** **international cooperation, in particular**

After **regional *insert* and subregional**

Paragraph 28.13 (i) (ii)

Replace **water resources management *with* water resources development, management and use**

Paragraph 28.14 (e)

Replace the paragraph with paragraph 8.8 (d) of the current medium-term plan

Paragraph 28.18 (b)

At the end of the paragraph, *add* and to monitor changes in the external debt situation and to identify innovative approaches and strategies to resolve the difficulties of countries with debt-servicing problems

Subprogramme 28.8

The title *should read* Public Administration, Finance and Development

Paragraph 28.19

Replace the paragraph with the following:

> **28.19 The subprogramme, being implemented by the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration, is to assist in intergovernmental policy deliberations on the role of public administration, public finance and public economics in the development process. The subprogramme also provides assistance to interested Governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in strengthening their capacity for socio-economic development management, including infrastructure, which is necessary for their institutional and human resources development as well as policy analysis and policy-making, and also in implementing relevant commitments agreed upon at major United Nations conferences. The subprogramme will also ensure interface between the intergovernmental policy deliberations and the relevant operational work of the organizations of the United Nations system active in this field, in particular the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. The Committee recommended the deletion of programmes 5, 7 and 8 in the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.**

Legislative mandates: Subprogramme 28.7

Add **General Assembly resolution 52/185 – Enhancing international cooperation towards a durable solution to the external debt problem of developing countries.**

C. Proposed revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation

176. At its 20th meeting, on 17 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on proposed revisions to the regulations and rules governing programme planning, the programme aspects of the budget, the monitoring of implementation and the methods of evaluation (A/53/133).

177. It was noted that the above-mentioned Regulations and Rules were in need of updating, primarily to reflect the new format of the medium-term plan, current practices and relevant

resolutions of the General Assembly that were adopted since the last amendments approved by the Assembly in the resolution 42/215 of 21 December 1987.

178. Owing to the lack of time, the Committee decided to continue its consideration of this question at the second part of its thirty-eighth session.

D. New narrative for section 7A, Economic and social affairs, and section 26, Public information

General observations

179. The Committee welcomed the use of defined targets for the implementation of mandates, programmes and activities. The Committee noted that, in general, there was little indication of the level and quality of outputs expected to be achieved nor how progress towards the achievement of objectives should be measured. The Committee expressed concern that without such indicators in programme narratives, the usefulness of the performance evaluation function was less than it should be and that in this manner evaluations could not fully determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the Organization's activities.

180. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to improve the preparation of future programme budgets by better formulation of objectives, in accordance with the medium-term plan and indicators of achievement and the level of resources required for full implementation of mandated programmes and activities.

Section 7A, Economic and social affairs

181. At its 21st meeting, on 17 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the new narrative for section 7A, Economic and social affairs (E/AC.51/1998/6 (sect. 7A))

182. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

183. Support was expressed for the new narrative and for the consolidation of the former three departments in the economic and social area in the new Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

184. The view was expressed that the titles of the various subprogrammes were at times inconsistent with the titles in the revised medium-term plan, and that the narrative of each subprogramme should have been accompanied by a statement of objectives under that subprogramme. The view was also expressed that specific performance indicators should have been included in the narrative.

185. A view was expressed that the new narrative was based on the approved medium-term plan and not on programme 28 of the revised medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, which was still under consideration. With regard to references to the report of the Secretary-General on reform (A/51/950), it was noted that such a document did not constitute a legislative mandate for the consolidation of the three departments. Concern was expressed that the reduction in the total number of subprogrammes from the original ten in programmes 5, 7 and 8, to eight under the proposed new programme 28, could have an adverse effect

on the implementation of the existing mandates. The Committee received details showing that all the mandates and objectives of the former subprogrammes had been maintained in the relevant subprogrammes of section 7A; the scope of technical cooperation activities in the department should be viewed in conjunction with the activities described in section 21, Regular programme of technical cooperation. It was stressed that the reduction of resources in the new department resulted from the consolidation of the three administrative units into one, and not from substantive areas.

186. It was considered that the mandate for the fact-finding missions to be undertaken by the Division for the Advancement of Women, as well as the role to be played by the host country, should have been more clearly described in paragraph 7A.38. The representative of the Secretariat indicated that the Division for the Advancement of Women participated, at the invitation of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and when relevant, in fact-finding missions led by the High Commissioner, in order to provide its expertise on gender and women's issues.

187. It was considered that the report contained some outdated information which needed to be brought up to date by way of a corrigendum.

188. Satisfaction was expressed at the inclusion of the issue of external debt in subprogramme 7, Global development trends, issues and policies, and it was suggested that this issue be also reflected in the proposed programme 28 of the medium-term plan currently under consideration.

Conclusions and recommendations

189. The Committee commended the inclusion in the programme narrative for section 7A, Economic and social affairs, of quantified targets for a number of outputs. That would help in assessing performance. But the Committee noted that the formulation of objectives in the section could be improved. In particular, there was little indication of the quality of output expected to be achieved, or how progress towards the achievement of objectives should be measured. The Committee expressed concern that without such indicators in the programme narrative, eventual evaluation could not fully determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the programme.

190. The Committee therefore recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to improve formulation of objectives and indicators of expected achievement when preparing the proposed programme narrative for this programme for the next biennium.

191. The Committee also recommended that the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly consider paragraphs 7A.22, 7A.23 and 7A.24 in the light of the ongoing reform process under General Assembly resolution 51/12 B of 19 December 1997.

192. The Committee further recommended approval of the new narrative of section 7A, Economic and social affairs, subject to the following modifications:

(a) ***Paragraph 7A.6, first sentence***

(i) ***Replace*** **on request** ***with*** **at their request and in accordance with their national policies**

(ii) ***After*** **aimed at** ***insert*** **the promotion of**

(iii) ***After*** **sustainable development** ***insert*** **, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences,**

(b) ***Paragraph 7A.18*** — **The first sentence of the paragraph *should read*:**

The Commission, which acted as the preparatory body for the Fourth World Conference on Women, has a central role within the United Nations system, assisting the Council, in monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Conference at all levels, and advising the Council thereon, in accordance with its strengthened mandate.

(c) ***Paragraph 7A.31*** — **At the end of the third sentence, *insert* , in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences**

(d) ***Paragraph 7A.38*** — ***Replace* the last sentence *with* The Division will provide on request, in accordance with the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, gender expertise for specific technical cooperation, including, as appropriate, for needs assessment and project formulation.**

(e) ***Paragraph 7A.49 (c) (ii)*** — **The last phrase of the paragraph *should read*:**

and substantive servicing of 10 meetings, in accordance with relevant decisions and resolutions of the Commission for Social Development, as endorsed by the Economic and Social Council, and the decisions and resolutions of the Council and the General Assembly.

(f) ***Paragraph 7A.53*** — **In the second sentence, *replace* countries *with* States**

(g) ***Paragraph 7A.75***

(i) In the second sentence, *after* achievements, *insert* as well as constraints and problems

(ii) In the third sentence, *replace* the phrase in parentheses *with* (the developing countries, particularly African countries and least developed countries)

Section 26, Public information

193. At its 22nd meeting, on 18 June 1998, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Secretary-General on the new narrative for section 26, Public information (E/AC.51/1998/6 (sect. 26)).

194. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the new narrative in respect of section 26, Public information, and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the section.

Discussion

195. Great importance was attached to the public information activities of the Organization. The reorientation of the public information activities was noted, under which the communications function was being placed at the heart of the strategic management of the Organization. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts to reach out to new audiences and to convey the message of the United Nations at the grassroots level. Note was also taken of the emphasis given to communication and dissemination of information at the country and local levels. It was emphasized that it was essential for the Organization to explain the role and range of its public information activities. The view was expressed that the promotion of priority issues, such as peace and security, sustainable development, environment, ageing, drug abuse, crime control and women and economic development should be given solid support. It was pointed out that, since the image of the United Nations in some countries was positive, unlike in some others, information strategy to different target groups should be devised accordingly.

196. It was observed that some of the activities under subprogramme 1, Promotional services, and subprogramme 2, Information services, appeared to be similar and thus required clarification.

197. Concern was expressed that, unlike in the medium-term plan for 1998–2001, there was no adequate reference made in the new programme narrative to cooperation between Member States and the United Nations in the field of public information activities. The view was expressed that it would have been useful to indicate performance indicators in the narrative, so that the achievement of the objectives and its timeliness could be measured.

198. Attention was drawn to the conclusions of the Committee on Information and the view expressed that qualitative enhancement of information material, training courses for developing countries and economies in transition, and publication in the six United Nations official languages were not reflected adequately in the new programme narrative. The view was expressed that the description of the role of the United Nations information centres should have been further elaborated, and comments were made to the effect that no mention was made of the needs of the host Governments.

199. It was observed that certain phrases, such as "close contact" in paragraph 26.4 (a), "key constituencies" in paragraph 26.8 and "innovative ways" in paragraph 26.9 required clarification. It was also pointed out that the overall guidance referred to in paragraph 26.4 (a) was provided by the intergovernmental bodies, and not by the Secretariat, and that the latter was to follow those guidelines.

200. The view was expressed that the priorities mentioned in paragraphs 26.7 and 26.10 should be based on the medium-term plan. With regard to the order of listing priority issues, it was pointed out that peace and security should have been placed at the beginning and, although the list of priorities was not exhaustive, information activities on peacekeeping operations should have been included.

201. The organization of the first United Nations World TV Forum was appreciated. However, the view was expressed that it would have been more appropriate to mention such examples in the introductory remarks, rather than in the programme narrative. It was noted that another edition of the Forum would be organized by the Department in 1998.

202. Great importance was attached to the role of the United Nations information centres and field offices. It was pointed out that further strengthening of the United Nations information centres and field offices should be encouraged. Support was given to the professional training in respect of the United Nations information centres, but concern was expressed about the limitations imposed by the resource allocations referred to in paragraph

26.12. The view was expressed that the United Nations information centres might include the host country's language in addition to the six United Nations official languages in their public information material. It was noted that, as the key communicators to the European public, the role of the United Nations Information Services at Geneva and Vienna was very important.

203. Clarification was requested as to which subprogrammes under the Public information programme carried out the information activities pertaining to the campaign for the global awareness of the critical economic situation of Africa, and the view was expressed that, in addition to publications, other forms of public information should also be used in support of the awareness campaign.

204. It was noted that there was a good balance in the new narrative between traditional and electronic media. However, it was pointed out that, while the best use of modern electronic information technology should be encouraged, due priority should be given, in parallel, to the traditional media, such as print media, radio and television. It was emphasized that the role of such traditional media was extremely important in disseminating information, especially in developing countries, since that still remained the best placed media to reach all the corners of the world. While expressing support for the use of electronic means of communication, especially the Internet, the view was expressed that the possibilities of transmitting the United Nations messages through the Internet in all six official languages should be explored. The observation was made that the United Nations home page was one of the best, but concern was expressed that it was not available in all the official languages of the United Nations.

205. As regards direct shortwave broadcasting, the view was expressed that, since there was no decision on the matter yet, its mention in the new narrative was inappropriate.

Conclusions and recommendations

206. The Committee commended the inclusion in the programme narrative on section 26, Public information, of quantified targets for a number of outputs. That would help in assessing performance. But the Committee noted that the formulation of objectives in the section could be improved. In particular, there was little indication of the quality of output expected to be achieved, or how progress towards the achievement of objectives should be measured. The Committee expressed concern that, without such indicators in the programme narrative, eventual evaluation could not fully determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the programme.

207. The Committee therefore recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to improve formulation of objectives and indicators of expected achievement when preparing the proposed programme narrative for this programme for the next biennium.

208. The Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the new programme narrative for section 26, Public information, subject to the following modifications:

(a) At the end of the second sentence of paragraph 26.1, *add* and 52/70 of 10 December 1997.

(b) In the last sentence of paragraph 26.2, *replace* 1996, of the first United Nations *with* 1996, and in 1997, of the United Nations.

E. Evaluation

1. Strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives

209. At its 2nd and 4th meetings, on 1 and 2 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (A/53/90). The report reviewed in-depth and self-evaluation activities during the period 1996–1997.

Discussion

210. The report was discussed in the context of its function of reviewing the effectiveness of the United Nations evaluation practices and the contributions of such evaluation findings to improving programme design and delivery and the issuance of policy directives. While its brevity and clarity were appreciated, regret was expressed about the rather descriptive nature of the report, which did not reveal all the potential of evaluation. Observations were made on the uneven progress in the establishment of evaluation systems in the different offices and departments. It did not appear that the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget and the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation were being adequately implemented in all parts of the Organization, in particular with regard to support services. In this connection, it was observed that only a few departments had sought the views of stakeholders and clients, and that common services had not yet been subject to evaluation. Disappointment was expressed that the overall situation had not changed significantly in the last two years.

211. The view was expressed that the issue of an effective evaluation system was of special importance in the context of ongoing reform and, in particular, the Secretary-General's proposals on results-based budgeting. The evaluation practice of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and ECE and UNCTAD approach, which emphasized feedback from and participation of Governments in evaluation processes, were cited as examples of good practices. These practices were contrasted with the use of efficiency reviews designed to achieve savings, notably in support services and in the political programmes. It was acknowledged that the diversity of the methods and approaches to evaluation reflects differences in the nature of the programmes; however it was also stressed that evaluation should be based on standards that enable Member States, the Committee and other reviewing intergovernmental bodies to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme. In this connection, it was suggested that, in accordance with rule 107.1 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget and Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, evaluation standards and analysis should utilize performance indicators that would make it possible to conduct an in-depth analysis of whether Secretariat implementation of programmes is efficient and having the desired effects.

212. The view was expressed that the Office of Internal Oversight Services guidelines on programme monitoring and evaluation issued jointly with the Department of Management did not conform with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning. The view was expressed that the guidelines should have been submitted to the Committee for its consideration and approval before their issuance to programme managers. In this connection, it was requested that the guidelines be provided to the Committee to enable it to take appropriate action. The view was expressed that the Committee should have been consulted

before these guidelines were issued. It was further noted that the guidelines were of a quality which was far inferior to articles VI and VII and the glossary contained in the annex to the existing Regulations and Rules. The Office of Internal Oversight Services was commended for its initiative in assisting programme managers to discharge their responsibilities with regard to programme monitoring and self-evaluation and was encouraged to report on the status of implementation of the guidelines in due course. The Secretariat stated that the guidelines were consistent with the existing General Assembly Regulations Governing Programme Planning and that the report was submitted in accordance with regulation 7.4.

213. Views were expressed that the issue of the guidelines, as mentioned in section 3 of the report (para. 33), should be considered at the thirty-ninth session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

214. It was observed that the General Assembly and its Committees had not yet considered the implications of the Secretary-General's proposals on results-based budgeting, and it was further observed that the guidelines should not prejudge the outcome of this process.

215. Concern was expressed about the evaluation of the reports on economic issues by consultants. They should have been examined by the United Nations staff who were familiar with the issues and aware of the views of Member States.

216. Specific measures for improving the evaluation process were proposed. The need for inclusion of information on the utilization of evaluation results was suggested and the need for evaluation findings to be given to functional intergovernmental bodies reviewing the programmes was reaffirmed. The establishment of monitoring and evaluation units within offices and departments was called for, as was the systematization of evaluation processes and the dissemination of good practices as a means of improving efficiency and effectiveness.

217. It was noted that the guidelines were an attempt to establish some minimal standards for the new style of public sector management, and it was observed in this regard that the intergovernmental character of the United Nations should be borne in mind. The view was expressed that comprehensive programme monitoring and evaluation were essential for effective management within the Secretariat and for effective review by intergovernmental bodies. It was further expressed that effective functioning of the Committee and the Secretariat required that the mandated programme monitoring and evaluation take place. This was necessary for them to fulfil their respective roles in prioritizing activities, determining the validity of programmes, assessing old mandates, providing guidance on programme design, identifying duplication and overlap and appraising levels of coordination.

218. The view was also expressed that the existing Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget and the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation are most comprehensive, clear and specific. If followed, they would provide a sound basis for effective monitoring and evaluation; regrettably, these Regulations and Rules had not been fully implemented. It was further expressed that self-evaluation by programme managers was a valuable function, as there were too many programmes and limited time for evaluations to be conducted only by intergovernmental bodies. In this regard, regulation 7.3 and rule 107.3 provided for self-evaluations to be conducted according to the guidelines established by the Central Evaluation Unit. Such guidelines, recently issued, were a hopeful indication that self-evaluations would be effectively conducted.

Conclusions and recommendations

219. The Committee viewed effective programme monitoring and evaluation as important elements in internal management and intergovernmental reviews. The Committee stressed the importance and necessity of further improving and integrating evaluation into the cycle of programme planning, budgeting and monitoring with a view to improving and strengthening programme formulation and implementation.

220. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the addition of the following two programmes to the schedule of in-depth evaluations; reports on those evaluations were to be submitted to the Committee at its forty-first session: policy coordination and sustainable development and population.

2. In-depth evaluation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

221. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 1 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/2).

Discussion

222. It was considered that the report identified a number of key issues that will require the further attention of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The view was expressed that the work of the Programme was valued. It was noted that the report was being considered by the Committee a few days before the opening of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the drug problem.

223. Concern was expressed regarding reductions in regular budget funds over the recent biennial budget periods. It was noted that some relevant activities had not been fully addressed because of the lack of sufficient resources, as pointed out in the report. It was observed that the prevalence of earmarked voluntary contributions in funding the Programme activities was the source of additional difficulties. It was observed that several proposals presented in the report implied new activities; the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should review these proposals, including financial implications. It was felt that the establishment of the new Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention should not detract from the priorities of drug control, and that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should retain their separate identities. It was observed that increased decentralization from Programme headquarters to its field offices was a positive development, but it should be matched by a stronger programme coordination function at headquarters. Mention was made of the importance of the media in disseminating information.

224. It was generally agreed that the recommendations presented in the report were appropriate and useful. In the course of the debate, the following observations were made:

(a) **Recommendation 3**. It was observed that recommendation 3 was addressing a very complex problem and should not be interpreted as a suggestion to amend the scheduling system provided for by the conventions. It was suggested that improvements could be sought not in the scheduling system itself but in the administrative and bureaucratic procedures involved;

(b) **Recommendation 4**. It was stated that in implementing recommendation 4 due attention should be given to the concerns of transit States. It was stated that recommendation 4 (b) should have included the issue of supply reduction;

(c) **Recommendation 13**. The recommended involvement of all relevant programmes and agencies of the United Nations system was strongly endorsed.

Conclusions and recommendations

225. The Committee commended the quality and comprehensive nature of the report and its analysis of the complex issues at hand.

226. The Committee recalled the high priority that Member States attached to the Programme, as reflected in the participation of many heads of state and high-level delegations in the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the drug problem.

227. Bearing in mind that the Programme will need to implement the recommendations in the light of the outcome of the twentieth special session, the Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 14 of the report and transmitted it for review and action by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-second session.

228. The Committee recommended that the Programme be fully involved in and operate within the United Nations development assistance framework.

229. The Committee decided that the consolidation of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme should not undermine the critical importance of the comprehensive programme on drug control, which should be fully implemented in accordance with the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.

230. The Committee emphasized that the realignment of the Centre for International Crime Prevention with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme should result in better coordination between these entities and should produce important synergies, while safeguarding the multidisciplinary aspects of drug control policy.

3. In-depth evaluation of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme

231. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 1 and 2 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/3).

Discussion

232. It was agreed that the Programme was of high priority. Concern was expressed about the lack of resources in view of the extensive mandates that the Programme had to carry out and the importance of priority-setting was pinpointed. It was noted that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Control had strategic management responsibility for the Programme and was involved in streamlining its work and thus reducing the demands for substantive servicing so that more resources could be devoted to providing technical

assistance to the countries in need. The Commission had also started work on a more dynamic approach to fund-raising. The role of Member States in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme, including in the reduction of the heavy reporting requirements, was pointed out.

233. It was regretted that terrorism had not been covered in the in-depth evaluation report, despite its high-priority nature as identified in the medium-term plan. It was felt that the mainstreaming of gender issues should have been reflected in the report. The view was expressed that the evaluation should have looked into the various forms of organized transnational crime, economic crime, the laundering of the proceeds of crime, corruption, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, environmental offences and illicit traffic in children.

234. It was agreed that a public information strategy would be useful to enhance the visibility of the Programme and support for it; such a strategy could also be used with an educational aim concentrating, in particular, on crime prevention and its root causes. It was pointed out that cooperation of the Centre for International Crime Prevention with regional institutions should be considered a crucial element of the strategy of the Programme and should be encouraged.

235. The view was expressed that attention should be devoted to ensuring that the coordination or cooperation mechanisms work well given the array of partners of the Programme.

236. The significant development of electronic tools for dissemination was noted, but it was felt that traditional hard-copy forms of documentation should not be neglected. The view was expressed that high importance should be given to the assistance to be provided to the developing countries to enable them to use electronic tools such as the United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network (UNCJIN) and the United Nations Crime and Justice Clearing House (UNOJUST) adequately.

237. It was noted with satisfaction that the Programme included a regional adviser for Asia and the Pacific based at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and funded from extrabudgetary sources, and that significant substantive contributions were being made under this arrangement. However, concern was expressed that in the $30 million allocated to the regional commissions under the regular programme of technical cooperation, there was no provision for work on crime prevention and criminal justice; it was hoped that this situation would be redressed in the context of future regular budget allocations.

238. The view was expressed that the Centre for International Crime Prevention should also explore the possibility of cooperating with subregional organizations having responsibilities for crime prevention and criminal justice wherever they existed.

Conclusions and recommendations

239. The Committee was of the view that the Programme should give adequate attention to all mandated activities, *inter alia*, to the activities included as priorities in the medium-term plan.

240. The Committee recalled the high priority that Member States attached to the Programme and endorsed recommendations 1 to 17 contained in section V of the report.

241. The Committee recommended that the crucial role and mandate of the Department of Public Information should be borne in mind.

4. Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: start-up phase

242. At its 4th, 5th and 10th meetings on 2 and 5 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled "Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: start-up phase", transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/4).

Discussion

243. It was noted with appreciation that some evaluation recommendations had been implemented; it was also noted, however, that the implementation effort should be more thorough. The thrust of the report pinpointing deficiencies in implementation was noted. The view was expressed that much work appeared necessary to fulfil the recommendations from previous reports. While it was noted with satisfaction that the Resource Centre had been established, there was concern that the problems which are preventing the full use of the resources had not been addressed as yet. Concern was also expressed that the Guideline Standard Operating Procedures for the military component of peacekeeping operations had not been updated.

244. It was noted that progress had been made in improving the standby arrangements referred to in paragraph 33 of the report. However, it was underscored that the Standby Forces High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) referred to in paragraph 34 of the report should not be misconstrued as being a United Nations brigade. It was further underscored that the reference to SHIRBRIG should not have been included in the report. The view was expressed that it had no relevance to the United Nations standby arrangements.

245. The deficiencies that still remained in the procurement system were discussed, and emphasis was placed on the critical importance of efficient, transparent and cost-effective procurement of goods and services in support of peacekeeping operations. Concern was expressed that the field administration manual and the operational support manual were not yet in final form. The need for broadening the geographical base of the supplier roster and the procurement of goos and services on as wide a geographical basis as possible was emphasized. It was observed that a recommendation should have been made on procurement, as this area needed a lot of improvement.

246. Other topics discussed in the debate included the functioning and funding of the Lessons Learned Unit, the repatriation of civil police officers and military observers, the issue of gratis personnel and the adequacy of the resources of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the nature and scope of training activities in the Department, the nature of rosters maintained by the Department and the status of the analytical budgeting system for peacekeeping operations. Regarding the repatriation of unqualified civilian police monitors, the view was expressed that the monitors should be tested in their respective countries before arrival in the mission area to avoid unnecessary expenses being borne by the police contributors.

247. The view was expressed that recommendation 3 did not conform with existing procedures. The Lessons Learned Unit did not have the mandate to modify existing policies and procedures; it could make recommendations to the relevant intergovernmental bodies for their consideration and approval. The recommendation, therefore, needed to be revised.

248. The view was expressed that monitoring of human rights could not be a component of the peacekeeping operations.

249. It was stated that there should be better coordination among departments in the Secretariat on the human rights component of peacekeeping operations, in particular there was a need for better training for personnel on human rights issues and more effective recruitment of human rights personnel for field operations.

Conclusions and recommendations

250. There was agreement in the Committee on the continued importance and relevance of peacekeeping operations.

251. The Committee recalled that in recent experience some peacekeeping operations had been mandated to include multiple tasks. The Committee recommended that consideration be given to the impact of this on the operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

252. The Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 7 contained in section III of the report on the understanding that the Lessons Learned Unit did not have the mandate to modify existing policies and procedures that require intergovernmental concurrence.

253. As to recommendation 5 of the original evaluation (E/AC.51/1995/2 and Corr.1), the Committee reiterated its conclusion arrived at at its thirty-fifth session that the recommendation needed to be examined further by the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

5. Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of the programme on environment

254. At its 5th and 10th meetings, on 2 and 5 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of the programme on environment, transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/5).

Discussion

255. In relation to paragraph 2 of the note by the Secretary-General, the view was expressed that this report, being a follow-up report that does not address the entire UNEP mandate, especially in the integration of trade, environment and development, cannot provide an input to the report that will be submitted to the General Assembly on the strengthening of United Nations activities in the area of environment.

256. The report was found to provide an informative review of progress made by UNEP in implementing the recommendations made by the Committee. It was observed that the reduction in resources during the period reviewed and managerial difficulties contributed to the lack of implementation of a number of recommendations. It was felt that the reduction in the appropriations for UNEP under the regular budget had led to the non-implementation of some of its activities. Paragraph 124 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution S/19-2 of 8 June 1997 in which it was stated that a revitalized UNEP should be supported by adequate, stable and

predictable funding, was recalled. It was reaffirmed that the mandate of UNEP derived from Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and the revitalization of this mandate both by the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme of February 1997[1] and the outcome of the nineteenth special session on the review of the implementation of Agenda 21. Paragraph 123 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, in which it was stated that UNEP was the principal United Nations body in the field of environment, was recalled. Confidence was expressed that the reform proposals of the new Executive Director, presented to the UNEP Governing Council at its fifth special session, in May 1998, would also contribute to the revitalization and strengthening of UNEP. It was noted that the Council had decided that UNEP should give priority, in the short and medium term, to: (a) environmental assessment, (b) coordination of environmental conventions, © freshwater, (d) technology transfer and industry and (e) support to Africa. It was observed that the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session should be implemented in that context.

257. It was stated that there was a need to reorient the coordination of the activities of the United Nations system on environment, an issue addressed in recommendation 2 of the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations programme on environment (E/AC.51/1995/3 and Corr.1). It was stated that UNEP should participate more fully in the system-wide coordination taking place under the Administrative Committee on Coordination. With respect to paragraph 10 of the triennial review, the view was expressed that UNEP had adequately implemented recommendation 2 and that it should continue to observe its role in promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda (see resolution S/19-2, annex, para. 123).

258. In the context of the importance of work done in the field of freshwater, referred to in the triennial review in relation to recommendation 3 of the in-depth evaluation, it was recalled that UNEP had been called upon to intensify its work in this field. There was a call made for UNEP to intensify its work in the field of freshwater in line with the decisions made at the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on freshwater, held in New York from 20 April to 1 May 1998. It was observed, however, that UNEP should concentrate strictly on environmental matters. Work in other fields, such as political and legal fields, should be conducted in other forums, as was in line with resolutions adopted at the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. With regard to the view expressed in paragraph 12 of the triennial review that strengthening UNEP action in some areas would not necessitate building strong in-house capacity, the view was expressed that internal scientific capacity is of particular importance to UNEP in view of its role in coordinating environmental activities in the United Nations system, based on its comparative advantage and scientific and technical expertise, as envisaged in paragraph 3 (d) of the Nairobi Declaration.[1] On the recommendation for the allocation of funds from the Environment Fund to other organizations, and the issue of funding in paragraph 31 of the triennial review, the view was expressed that in the light of the reductions in funds available to UNEP, the Environment Fund should be used for the implementation of UNEP activities, as was decided in paragraph 7 of the Nairobi Declaration, which affirmed the central importance of the Environment Fund as the principal source of financing for the implementation of the programme of UNEP. The view was expressed that the reallocation of a 20 per cent budget line should be done in consultation with the Governing Council of UNEP and not with the institutions concerned.

259. The importance of environmental assessment was noted, including monitoring to facilitate response to environmental emergencies, an issue addressed in several

recommendations of the in-depth evaluation. UNEP was strongly encouraged to work in collaboration with other organizations to gather environmental information.

260. Views were expressed that, as recommended in recommendations 7, 8 and 9 of the in-depth evaluation, the role of Earthwatch should not be enhanced, rather it should function in collaboration with UNEP's own network and Environment and Natural Resource Information Networks (ENRIN).

261. Regarding the work on indicators addressed in recommendation 9 of the in-depth evaluation, it was observed that this work should take into account the views of the developing countries. The extensive work done by other organizations on environmental indicators, including that of the World Bank, was noted, and UNEP was encouraged to work with others in this area. It was observed that UNEP should develop its own indicators to be examined by the Governing Council and then submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration.

262. With respect to recommendations 10 and 12 of the in-depth evaluation, it was recalled that in paragraph 119 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 it was observed that institutional arrangements for the convention secretariats should ensure the appropriate autonomy necessary for them to be efficient at their respective locations, and in paragraph 123 it was stated that UNEP should strive to promote the effective implementation of those conventions in a manner consistent with the provisions of the conventions and the decisions of the conferences of the parties.

263. It was observed that UNEP had facilitated the exchange of information within the scientific community, but that it was important, at this stage, to pay adequate attention to the information needs of the decision makers, as recommended in recommendation 18 of the in-depth evaluation. In this context, the role of UNEP as an effective link between the scientific community and policy makers at the national and international levels (see para. 3 (e) of the Nairobi Declaration) was recalled.

264. The view was expressed that the matter of fund-raising addressed in recommendation 22 of the in-depth evaluation, including the mobilization of new and additional resources, was of the utmost importance. It was suggested that management costs of UNEP should be reduced in favour of programme funding.

Conclusions and recommendations

265. The Committee was of the view that UNEP should fully implement the recommendations contained in the in-depth evaluation.

266. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that the triennial review be forwarded to the Governing Council of UNEP for its consideration.

Chapter III
Coordination questions

A. Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1997

267. At its 8th and 9th meetings, on 4 June 1998, the Committee considered the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for 1997

(E/1998/21). The Committee welcomed the new Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, who introduced the report.

Discussion

268. While appreciation was expressed for the report, the view was expressed that it was too descriptive and not sufficiently analytical. Previous decisions of the Committee were recalled whereby it was requested that the ACC report identify key questions, define problems, cite lessons learned and, wherever possible, make specific recommendations for the Committee's consideration, thus enabling the Committee to play a more meaningful coordination role. It was also reiterated that there was need for greater interaction between the Committee and the organizations and agencies of the system, and reference was made to the joint Committee for Programme and Coordination/Administrative Committee on Coordination meetings, discontinued by force of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996.

269. Views were expressed that some issues addressed in the context of the work of ACC mentioned in the report did not correspond to the programme priorities established by the General Assembly in the current medium-term plan. Views were also expressed that ACC was a body with membership composed of the United Nations, its funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, which had their own intergovernmental bodies that set priorities for their own respective medium-term plans. Thus, the main objective of ACC, in the context of its coordinating role, was to focus on the interlinkages between the various programme areas of work and thus address the overall priorities of the organizations of the system. It was also explained that priorities had to be assessed over time, and that the work programme of ACC in any given year had to respond to the particular issues being given special attention by the central intergovernmental bodies, such as reform or the follow-up to a given international conference.

270. It was pointed out that the reform process initiated in the United Nations had a broad impact on the United Nations system as a whole. Therefore, the actions that will be implemented should respect fully the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly. In this context, the ACC inter-agency machinery should play an important role in pooling capabilities and resources throughout the system, in further rationalizing the division of labour and in avoiding duplication to respond effectively to changing international requirements and increase the efficiency of operations of the United Nations organizations. In this regard, an ACC publication on common themes of the reform processes in the United Nations system was looked forward to.

271. The need for frequent briefings by ACC to relevant intergovernmental bodies was emphasized, since it was believed that this would result in greater interaction between the Committee and the Member States. Such an interaction would facilitate a two-way flow of information and views.

272. Views were expressed concerning the great importance attached to a number of issues mentioned in the report. However, it was stated that greater emphasis on development activities would lead to resolution of many issues that arise from economic deprivation.

273. In relation to section II of the report and to the follow-up to international conferences and summits, it was noted that no reference was made to the implementation and follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development.

274. With regard to the reference in the ACC report to human rights as a cross-cutting issue, it was pointed out that in the course of the discussion on this issue in document A/52/303, strong views were expressed that if there were any cross-cutting issue in the United Nations,

it ought to be development. It was recalled further that the General Assembly, in its consensus resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, deleted portions of the document A/52/303 that referred to human rights as a cross-cutting issue, and, therefore, ACC should fully respect this resolution. Views were expressed acknowledging the textual change to resolution 52/220. However, strong views were also expressed that human rights continued to be a cross-cutting issue throughout the United Nations system. Attention was also drawn to resolution 52/12 A, which dealt specifically with the programme of reform of the United Nations and the respect for mandates covered by the medium-term plan.

275. With regard to the issue of African economic recovery and development, it was recalled that the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa should be pursued as the implementation arm of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa, as called for by the General Assembly. It was considered that the linkage of the Special Initiative with the New Agenda needed to be qualitatively strengthened. Paragraph 7 of the conclusions of the mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/32 of 6 December 1996, was recalled. It stated that the System-wide Initiative on Africa was complementary to the New Agenda and was designed to facilitate its implementation and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits as they related to Africa and that the Special Initiative might also become an impetus for the implementation of all elements of the New Agenda.[2] It was also recalled that paragraph 191 of the Agenda for Development (General Assembly resolution 51/240, annex) stated that the United Nations system had a major role to play in coordinating and implementing activities that address the critical situation in Africa, including through the implementation of the New Agenda. It was therefore pointed out that the references in section V of the ACC report should refer to the implementation of the New Agenda through the Special Initiative, especially since the General Assembly decided in its resolution 51/32 to conduct a final review and appraisal of the implementation of the New Agenda in 2002.

276. In relation to section VI of the report, on operational activities for development, the view was expressed that the triennial review of operational activities for development that would be prepared by the Secretary-General under the guidance of ACC should address all dimensions of development, including, among others, humanitarian activities.

277. With respect to the programme of work of ACC, the view was expressed that attention should continue to be given to the full implementation of United Nations global conferences and summits as a framework for addressing developmental issues, including poverty eradication.

278. Support was expressed for the measures being undertaken within the United Nations system in providing assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations. It was indicated that many of those countries were doubly penalized by the application of sanctions, and enquiries were made as to whether the ad hoc expert group meeting called for in General Assembly resolution 52/162 of 15 December 1997 with a view to developing a possible methodology for assessing the consequences actually incurred by such States as a result of preventive or enforcement measures had yet been convened. Information was requested on its outcome.

279. It was noted that the members of ACC had pledged to give special attention to the needs and rights of street children and refugee and internally displaced children, and it was emphasized that ACC should also pay due attention to the needs of children under foreign occupation.

280. Appreciation was expressed for the attention being given by ACC to the system's relations with civil society. Views were also expressed that ACC had addressed the subject at a time when the General Assembly had not reached agreement on a definition for civil society. It was recalled that civil society groups operated within the jurisdiction of Member States, and it was noted that ACC should keep this in mind in considering mechanisms for improving relationships with civil society. It was also stated that relationships with the church were of crucial importance, particularly in efforts at reconciliation and peace building, and it was suggested that this element of civil society should not be forgotten as organizations of the system seek to strengthen the relationship with civil society. Views were expressed that the main focus of the discussions of ACC had been on the significance for the system as a whole of the growing involvement of civil society groups in the work of the various organizations of the system under modalities which differed from organization to organization, as directed by the respective government and legislative bodies.

281. The definition and use of the term "sustainable development" in annex III to the ACC report, was questioned. It was noted that the United Nations global conferences had defined the relationship between economic growth and sustainable development, which was also reflected in the medium-term plan and the Agenda for Development. In replying to the explanation given by the ACC secretariat that sustainable development was the concept used at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the implementation of Agenda 21, it was stressed again that the concept "sustainable development" was defined in paragraph 23 of Assembly resolution S/19-2 as follows: "Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development". It was further noted that the reference to sustainable development should have recalled that definition that was endorsed by the Assembly. The view was also expressed that the appendix focused on national and regional operations needed for the implementation of the commitments made in Agenda 21, without reference to the required efforts by the international community for the realization of those commitments.

282. With respect to administrative questions, the priority attention given to the issue of the security and safety of United Nations system staff and associated personnel in the field was welcomed, and it was stated that Member States should take the necessary action to ensure the safety of United Nations staff, including early implementation of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. In this regard, the view that the support of Governments should be enlisted in the implementation of the system-wide security policies was welcomed. On the question of the conditions of service and application of the Noblemaire principle, support was expressed for the application of the Noblemaire principle. It was considered that the recent studies of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) suggested that the requirements necessary to improve conditions of service had been met, and it remained for all Member States to support them. Views were expressed that the United Nations common system still remained competitive enough, taking into account its overall scope of conditions of service, and recent studies by ICSC proved that. It was also stressed that ACC should undertake a review of the ratio between permanent and fixed-term appointments on posts subject to geographical distribution, with a view to establishing common recruitment policies.

283. With respect to paragraph 4 in the appendix, in which it was suggested that the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development was political, it was stressed that in resolution S/19-2 it was stated that the Commission had a role to play in assessing the challenges of globalization as they relate to sustainable development and that it should promote policies that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability and should provide for integrated consideration of linkages, both among

sectors and between sectoral and cross-sectoral aspects of Agenda 21, while avoiding repetition of work undertaken by other relevant forums (paras. 130 and 131).

284. In providing clarifications with regard to some of the comments made, the secretariat indicated that all observations would be taken into account in the preparation of future reports. The secretariat also indicated its readiness to provide systematic briefings to members of the Committee, in cooperation with representatives of United Nations agencies and bodies.

Conclusions and recommendations

285. The Committee took note of the annual overview report of ACC and requested that future reports be more analytical and highlight problems encountered. They should also include a full listing of other system-wide reports before intergovernmental bodies relevant to the issues dealt with in the annual report. The Committee reiterated that ACC, in carrying out its primary task of strengthening coordination of activities of the United Nations system, should focus on the strategic objectives established in the Charter, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the medium-term plans of the organizations of the system.[3]

286. The Committee also recommended that ACC work towards the preparation, in each programme area of broad inter-agency concern, of strategic policy papers indicating issues to be addressed, coordination problems being encountered, what role each agency and/or organization should play and areas where intergovernmental guidance is required.

287. The Committee recommended that ways should be found to analyse and bring to its attention the results of the work of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, through the annual overview report of ACC, on issues dealt with by the Committee within its coordination mandate. In this context, the Committee emphasized the need for frequent briefings by ACC to relevant intergovernmental bodies, which would result in greater interaction between the ACC and Member States. Such an interaction would facilitate a two-way flow of information and views.

288. The Committee welcomed the role being played by ACC to bring about improved management effectiveness and policy coherence in the work of the United Nations system, including at the country level. It looked forward to reviewing the publication under preparation on the common themes guiding reform processes within the system.

B. Progress report on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996–2001

289. At its 9th meeting, on 4 June 1998, the Committee considered the progress report of the Secretary-General entitled "Mid-term review of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001" (E/CN.6/1998/3). It also had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the revised system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (E/1998/10) and a letter dated 27 April 1998 from the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Chairperson of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (E/AC.51/1998/8).

Discussion

290. It was emphasized that the system-wide medium-term plan serves as an effective monitoring and coordination tool at all levels. Appreciation was expressed for the preparation of the progress report, which was considered informative, comprehensive and insightful. It was recognized that the report demonstrated growing support for active gender-mainstreaming policies in the United Nations system.

291. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts of many organizations and entities of the United Nations system to implement the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular programmes directed towards the empowerment of women, as reflected in the progress report. Appreciation was further expressed for the gender-mainstreaming efforts of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP, UNESCO, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It was recognized that their programmes were directed towards empowerment, education and training, and employment of women.

292. Requests were made for additional information on certain areas of United Nations programming, including education of women and girls as it related to increased productivity and lower fertility, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and female genital mutilation.

293. It was suggested that emphasis should be placed on paragraph 11 of the report, which focuses on the impact of armed conflict on women, especially in foreign occupied areas that have been declared disputed territories by the Security Council in its resolutions. Delegations also stressed the need to establish an international criminal court, with special attention to war crimes that affect women and girls.

294. Attention was drawn to the mandates given by the General Assembly to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. Reference was made in particular to paragraph 4 of resolution 52/100, in which the Assembly called upon Member States and the United Nations system to implement the Platform for Action, in particular by promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective at all levels, including in the design, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes to ensure effective implementation of all critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action. The usefulness of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusion 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming was emphasized. It was noted that in paragraph 11 of resolution 52/100 the Committee had been requested by the Assembly to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective. Appreciation was expressed to the Inter-agency Committee for Women and Gender Equality for having made great progress in supporting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations system.

295. Regret was expressed that the financial crisis would adversely affect the implementation of the mandates for the advancement of women.

296. It was noted with great concern that progress in achieving gender balance in staffing seemed to suffer owing to the ongoing financial crisis and budget-cutting in the United Nations. It was emphasized that the interests and the rights of women needed to be reflected in staff development and career planning.

297. The view was expressed that the system-wide medium-term plan was ambitious, setting longer-term goals. It was felt that the report gave a candid analysis of the obstacles encountered in its effective and efficient implementation. Concern was expressed that satisfactory mainstreaming was still far from being achieved. It was reiterated that gender mainstreaming required integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes

in the United Nations system. The view was expressed that while gender mainstreaming was a gradual process, it should be pursued diligently.

298. Great concern was expressed about the reported low level of commitment on the part of United Nations managers and a lack of attention by them to policies regarding women and gender.

299. Grave concern was also expressed about the low commitment on the part of some United Nations agencies to gender mainstreaming, as evidenced by the report. It was noted that some United Nations entities seemed to equate gender mainstreaming issues with gender balance in staffing matters, resulting in a poor understanding of gender mainstreaming and its implications for programming.

300. The view was expressed that United Nations entities should strengthen their support to gender mainstreaming efforts at all levels, including the national level.

Conclusions and recommendations

301. The Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in the progress report (E/CN.6/1998/3, para. 52) and recommended that the Economic and Social Council approve them. The Committee recommended, in particular, that Member States take advantage of the recommendation contained in paragraph 52 (g), in which the use of expertise offered by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) was advised for the design, monitoring and evaluation of gender- responsive policies and programmes. The Committee also highlighted the recommendation in paragraph 52 (h) on employing inter-agency coordination mechanisms and bodies within the United Nations to promote an increasingly coordinated overall approach to gender mainstreaming.

302. The Committee took note of the comments made at the forty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the obstacles mentioned in the report. It recommended that measures should be taken to overcome the obstacles in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the system-wide medium-term plan.

303. The Committee recalled its own commitment by which it agreed to ensure, in its examination of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, that the mainstreaming of a gender perspective was reflected in the individual programmes of the medium-term plan and emphasized the responsibility of programme managers for progress in gender mainstreaming (A/51/16 (part I), para. 167). Accordingly, the Committee took note of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 52/100, in which the Assembly requested all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective.

304. The Committee recommended that measures be taken to overcome institutional obstacles to gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system. It invited the entities of the United Nations system to place more emphasis on coordination and collaboration among themselves in that regard.

305. Commending the 34 entities of the United Nations system that had contributed to the preparation of the progress report, the Committee noted the absence of some

key United Nations entities from the progress assessment. It recommended that all United Nations entities cooperate with the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women in monitoring the continued implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan.

306. The Committee recommended that entities of the United Nations system provide or increase gender analysis training to strengthen implementation of the system-wide plan and mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the United Nations system.

307. In recalling Economic and Social Council agreed conclusion 1997/2, the Committee recommended that all entities designate focal points to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan and mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the work of their respective entities.

308. The Committee recommended that efforts of the United Nations system to mainstream a gender perspective be further intensified, including the preparation of clear and practical guidelines for the implementation of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusion 1997/2. It further recommended development of performance indicators to allow the measurement of progress in the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan. The Committee called on all senior managers in the United Nations system to give high priority to gender mainstreaming, and, in this regard, to cooperate with, and seek the guidance of, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

309. The Committee, in reiterating the goal of gender balance in staffing, re-emphasized that this goal should be achieved in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and recommended the full and speedy implementation of resolutions 51/221 C of 3 April 1997 and 52/96 of 12 December 1997.

310. The Committee agreed to consider the new draft system-wide medium-term for the advancement of women for the period 2002–2005, to be prepared by the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, in the year 2000 (see Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/34).

C. United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

311. At its 10th meeting, on 5 June 1998, the Committee considered the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa for the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (E/AC.51/1998/7).

Discussion

312. The view was expressed that the progress report had shortcomings, among others that no programmes in the two priority areas of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification requested by the Committee at its thirty-seventh session were elaborated, and that throughout the report no concrete results were provided.

313. It was also felt that the progress report should have been more analytical than descriptive, and that language used in some paragraphs of the report, for example paragraphs 11 (a) and 12, was not the kind of language that should be used in United Nations reports.

314. It was further deplored that the progress report did not provide information on additional resources mobilized by the Special Initiative and urged that more resources be made available for its implementation. Dissatisfaction was expressed about the fact that in the only instance where the report tried to provide figures, which was the health sector, it was mentioned that to support the development of that sector in 10 African countries, about $3.5 billion was needed, of which more than half would have to be provided by the countries themselves and the remaining $1.5 billion would have to be mobilized by donors, including $500 million that might be provided by the World Bank.

315. Regarding the specific recommendations made by the Committee at its previous session,[4] satisfaction was expressed at the public awareness role exercised by the Secretary-General, but concern was voiced as to whether the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, ECA and UNDP had properly carried out their tasks in that respect. The need to rationalize the various instruments being used in the field, namely, the United Nations development assistance frameworks, the country strategy notes and other sectoral programmes, was emphasized. It was also felt that the linkage between the Special Initiative and the development assistance frameworks and country strategy notes should be more concrete and better structured.

316. The need to promote national ownership of the Special Initiative by African countries was stressed, and concern was expressed that a lot remained to be done to achieve that objective. The need to build partnership around national priorities, strategies and programmes was underscored. In that regard, it was stated that African countries must define their own priorities and programmes based on their respective needs. Views were expressed that the spirit of such partnership must reflect respect for the principle of sovereign equality of States.

317. Concern was voiced that the priority areas mentioned in the report were not exhaustive and, therefore, did not cover all the areas of concern of the African countries. It was requested that the priority areas of the Special Initiative should be those laid down by the Member States in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The view was expressed that the areas of priority should include, among others, poverty eradication, which should be the paramount activity within the United Nations system and without which success of the Special Initiative could not be measured, regional cooperation and integration, economic diversification, agricultural development and food security, soil degradation, water, trade and investment. Others welcomed the refocusing of the Special Initiative on areas where results had been achieved and underscored the need for the Special Initiative to concentrate on the priority areas of education, health, governance, harnessing information technology for development, gender and population.

318. It was underlined that the Special Initiative should serve as an instrument of coordination at various levels, including the national level and as a means to rationalize the utilization of resources made available to Africa. In that connection, the importance of coordination between the Special Initiative and bilateral organizations at the field level was emphasized. The view was expressed that the involvement of the Bretton Woods institutions was an important aspect of the overall coordination of development aid in Africa.

319. The view was expressed that there was a need to intensify the synergy between the Special Initiative and other programmes and initiatives, including those of the countries concerned. On the one hand, concern was expressed about the existence of two secretariats within the United Nations system and about whether a secretariat for the Special Initiative separate from the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries was needed; on the other hand, it was noted that the two secretariats performed different functions, with the Office of the Special Coordinator providing support to

intergovernmental bodies and consideration of issues related to African development, and the Special Initiative secretariat providing coordination and planning for programmes.

320. The view was expressed that it was necessary to use concrete indicators of performance to measure progress made in the implementation of the Special Initiative and to analyse the lessons learned with a view to more efficient and effective implementation of the Special Initiative. It was emphasized that if the Special Initiative were to achieve its implementation in the priority areas indicated above, it would be important to focus more on operational activities than on organizing colloquia, seminars and workshops.

321. Concern was voiced about the challenges that the Special Initiative was facing in identifying in a convincing manner its added value in view of declining official development assistance and marginal investment flows for Africa, its mainstreaming within the United Nations system and the building of sustainable partnerships for Africa through the Special Initiative. It was stated that the success and effectiveness of the Special Initiative were to be judged in terms of its ability to address those challenges.

322. With respect to the linkage between the Special Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, it was stressed that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the New Agenda stated in its report[5] that the Special Initiative was complementary to the New Agenda and was designed to facilitate its implementation and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits as they related to Africa, and that the Special Initiative might also become an impetus for the implementation of all elements of the New Agenda. It was furthermore recalled that the Assembly, in its resolution 51/32 of 6 December 1996, adopted the conclusions of the Ad Hoc Committee and requested the Secretary-General, pending the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda in 2002, to submit to it at its fifty-third and fifty-fifth sessions a progress report. Reference was also made to the Agenda for Development,[6] which stated that the United Nations system had a major role to play in coordinating and implementing activities that addressed the critical situation in Africa, including through the implementation of the New Agenda and the follow-up of the outcome of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development and other related initiatives. In order fully to comply with Assembly decisions and resolutions concerning United Nations activities in Africa, it was emphasized that reference should be made in the future in all United Nations documents to the implementation of the New Agenda through the Special Initiative on Africa.

Conclusions and recommendations

323. The Committee took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General and of the results achieved in the implementation of the Special Initiative.

324. The Committee considered that those results were interesting and constituted some progress compared with the previous situation. They were nonetheless insufficient as regards the number of countries and the limited areas covered so far.

325. The Committee underlined that the development of Africa was one of the priorities of the medium-term plan and that the critical economic situation of Africa was of serious concern to the international community in general.

326. The Committee also underlined that the General Assembly would undertake the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda in 2002.

327. The Committee recommended that ACC be requested to intensify its efforts to mobilize fully the analytical and operational capacities and capabilities of the United Nations system at the service of the Special Initiative for the implementation of the New Agenda, in order to achieve coverage of the maximum number of countries and areas of activity.

328. The Committee recommended that the different lead agencies be called upon, under the coordination of the Steering Committee, to develop, in their respective areas, a common strategic framework for action that analyses and highlights the problems, sets the goals, determines the respective contributions of organizations, indicates necessary resources and sets reference points, including performance indicators, in order to permit an effective follow-up of results, taking as the starting point the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda in 2002 and implied incentive measures.

329. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat of the Special Initiative be strengthened, and especially that its working relations be tightened with the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, the substantive divisions of ECA and the focal points of agencies and organizations, including, in case of need, the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on Africa's Critical Economic Situation, Recovery and Development, and by allocating to it the necessary resources.

330. In the area of coordination, the Committee took note of the actions undertaken in response to the recommendations made at its thirty-seventh session. It requested that efforts be intensified in that respect, in particular as regards the orientation and advocacy role of the Secretary-General, the follow-up and catalytic role of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the operational role of UNDP and ECA. The Committee requested that further coordination measures aimed at establishing a dynamic and a common framework of action be strengthened at the field level. This framework should indicate the contributions of the different partners.

331. Regarding the linkages between the Special Initiative and the New Agenda, the Committee recommended that they be further clarified, and reaffirmed that the Special Initiative was the dynamic instrument for the implementation of the New Agenda. The Committee recalled the recommendation made at its thirty-seventh session that programmes should be rapidly prepared in the two priority areas of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification.

332. The Committee recommended that efforts be intensified in order to establish a vigorous plan of increased mobilization of resources directed at the eradication of poverty, economic development, substantial reduction of debt, institution of partnership innovations, market access and trade opportunities, mobilization of domestic resources and allocation of additional resources. In that regard, the Committee called for the greater involvement of Bretton Woods Institutions in the increased mobilization of resources for capacity-building of African countries.

333. The Committee requested that a new progress report on the implementation of the Special Initiative be submitted for consideration at its thirty-ninth session, including measures taken in response to the foregoing recommendations.

Chapter IV

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates

334. At its 6th and 7th meetings, on 3 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates" (A/51/946) and the comments of the Secretary-General thereon (A/52/685). The report of the Joint Inspection Unit was introduced by Mr. Sumihiro Kuyama, Inspector. The representative of the Department of Public Information introduced the note by the Secretary-General containing his comments.

Discussion

335. Appreciation was expressed to the Inspectors for the interesting and useful document and for its timely issuance, as well as to the Secretary-General for providing detailed and considered comments thereon. Regret was expressed that the discussion of this question, as well as action on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, had been postponed in the General Assembly for a number of years and that a more up-to-date paper on publications policy was not available. It was noted that recommendations 1, 2, 5 and 9 had been considered by the Committee on Conferences at its substantive session of 1997 (A/52/32).

336. The view was expressed that many recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit would contribute to greater cost-effectiveness of the Organization's publications. It was also pointed out that the report should have been confined to cost-effectiveness and not cover wider policy issues.

337. It was stated that the aim of publications was to fulfil an identifiable need and that they should therefore be demand-driven, cost-effective and not duplicate publications produced either inside or outside of the Organization. Doubt was expressed that the Organization would be in a position to coordinate with outside publications. The view was expressed that while the same subject may be covered by several departments and units at Headquarters and other duty stations, there were different perspectives and divergent strategies that should lead to flexibility on the part of programme managers regarding publications policies. It was suggested that the Organization consider the question of authors' rights. It was also suggested that there be more coordination within the United Nations system on publications policies. It was pointed out that different types of publications were not classified in the report.

338. The importance of full respect for legislative mandates and the key role of intergovernmental bodies were emphasized. The view was expressed that legislative bodies should review the mandates for publications and assess whether the publications continued to be relevant and useful, as suggested by the Joint Inspection Unit in recommendation 1. The view was expressed that this issue was being addressed by different bodies, resulting in the reduction of publications, and that there was no urgency to address it further. Reservations were expressed to recommendation 1. Reservations were also expressed to recommendation 5, concerning specific mandates for publications, as delegations believed that it was important to retain flexibility in the decisions to produce publications. Concerning recommendation 9, on the subject of requests for new publications subsequent to those approved in the programme budget and the incorporation of a time-frame, strong opposition

was expressed to a "sunset rule" and to the recommendation. The rule was also characterized as "very dangerous". While the view was expressed that such a rule should not be automatic in all cases, others were in strong support of this type of rule. Concern was expressed that so far only development-related entities launched the initiative of thorough review of their publications, whereas there was no initiative from other entities. It was recalled that the Committee was under a remit to assess the continuing validity of legislative mandates of more than five years standing. Support was expressed for the Joint Inspection Unit finding that the Committee's function of reviewing mandates needed to be strengthened. The view was also expressed, however, that a decision on recommendation 9 be deferred until the General Assembly had decided on the Secretary-General's proposal regarding the sunset rule.

339. While appreciating the importance of the Publications Board in rationalizing and overseeing publications policy, the view was expressed that this should in no way be interpreted as a kind of censorship authority over what departments produced. It was emphasized that substantive departments should take responsibility for their publications.

340 Support was expressed for the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit that all proposed publications programmes should be approved prior to the preparation of each biennial programme budget. It was thus suggested that the Secretary-General review the composition of the Publications Board, and that alternative arrangements should be considered. The question was raised whether a senior officer had been appointed as a full time secretary to the Board.

341. Support was expressed for the Organization's use of advanced technology in producing and disseminating publications in a cost-effective manner, in particular for its Internet site. However, the need to carefully assess the utility of publications was expressed, including assessment of other means of achieving the desired objectives. Notwithstanding the progress that had been achieved within the United Nations in electronic publishing, it was held that traditional print processes should continue to be utilized for the production of publications. With regard to the utility and readership of publications, the view was also expressed that the impact and effectiveness of publications that were meant to promote global awareness and advocacy could be enhanced by the adoption of objective circulation policies that targeted the intended readership.

342. It was also stressed that the final decision on the outsourcing of printing (recommendation 12) should be taken after consideration of the comprehensive report by the Secretary-General on outsourcing practices and its consideration by the General Assembly.

343. The importance of the sale of publications, both in print and electronic versions, as an income-generating activity was underlined. Strong support was expressed for the Joint Inspection Unit recommendations concerning timely production of sales income reports, more flexible treatment of sales income and more vigorous sales promotion to maximize financial returns to the United Nations. Support was also expressed concerning the policy of tier-pricing. The view was expressed that the concerns of the developing countries should be taken into account when discussing the raise in sales income.

344. While underlining the need to enhance budgetary control of publications, support was expressed for the call by the Joint Inspection Unit for a more complete cost-accounting system for publications. The view was expressed that there should be a more flexible use of funds in the external printing accounts. Regret was expressed that the report focused solely on the cost-effectiveness of the publications and did not address the issue of late

submission of documentation to the intergovernmental bodies, which impacted on the effectiveness of their work.

345. With reference to paragraph 7 of the comments of the Secretary-General (A/52/685, annex), it was observed that in the biennium 1996–1997, some publications were affected because of budgetary constraints. The continued review and prioritization of publications in their programmes, despite the fact that the General Assembly had approved the proposed budget for the biennium 1998–1999, was questioned. It was stated that it was not the job of the Secretariat to set priorities; it was the prerogative of Member States.

346. It was expressed that paragraph 14 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit was not relevant to the subject of the report. The view was expressed that the Inspectors should have avoided discussion of the issue raised in paragraph 14 in the report and should have focused on the cost-effectiveness of United Nations publications.

Conclusions and recommendations

347. The Committee stressed that publications play an important role in raising public awareness and promoting the activities of the United Nations.

348. The Committee endorsed recommendations 2, 10 and 16 of the Joint Inspection Unit.

349. Emphasizing the continuing relevance of printed publications, the Committee endorsed recommendation 14, on the understanding that the question of provision of funds for the work would be reviewed by relevant bodies.

350. On the understanding that the Publications Board would facilitate, rather than control, the publications and that the relevant intergovernmental bodies and substantive departments must take primary responsibility for their output vis-à-vis substance, namely, effectiveness and relevance to mandates, the Committee endorsed recommendations 4 and 6 and recommended that the composition of the Board be reviewed, including the consideration of alternative arrangements.

351. The Committee recommended that recommendations 3, 7, 8, 11 to 13, 17 and 18 be considered by the relevant bodies dealing with administrative and budgetary questions before the General Assembly takes a final decision on these recommendations.

352. The Committee did not reach consensus on recommendations 1, 5, 9 and 15.

Chapter V

Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate

353. The item entitled "Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate" was included in the programme of work of the Committee as an approach to encourage the promotion of all its potential. To this end, no change in the mandate of the Committee was contemplated. Only practical difficulties needed to be addressed with a view to bolstering the Committee's efficiency and effectiveness. The discussion of the item focused on the issues set out below.

Documentation

354. The documents should be factual and analytical and should be prepared in conformity with legislative mandates in order to facilitate the deliberations of the Committee.

355. Documents should also be submitted in accordance with the six-week rule, and their format should be as specified in paragraphs 24 and 25 of General Assembly resolution 52/214 B of 22 December 1997.

Secretariat

356. The secretariat of the Committee should be responsible for the timely submission of all documentation and should monitor the progress of its preparation, submitting a detailed report to the Committee at the start of the session, including an overview of the degree to which deadlines have been met. The secretariat of the Committee should also convey the Committee's conclusions and recommendations, as approved by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, to the relevant departments of the Secretariat.

Role of observers

357. The participation by observers in the deliberations of the Committee enriches and strengthens the work of the Committee. There should, therefore, be no distinction between the role of the members of the Committee and the observers, except in the case of voting, as stipulated in paragraph 3 of rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council. This would facilitate the acceptance of the recommendations and conclusions of the Committee.

358. Some countries rarely get a chance to serve on the Committee. They usually wait for a long time to seek re-election. Therefore, those countries which cannot serve as members of the Committee for a long time benefit by attending its meetings and contributing actively as observers. Participation as an observer in the deliberations can serve as a transitional stage for members and is, therefore, necessary and welcome.

Decision-making

359. Member States should work in a spirit of compromise and willingness, especially since the Committee concludes its work by consensus in accordance with resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 annexes I and II thereto.

Preparation of reports

360. Reports of the Committee should be prepared in accordance with the following guidelines:

(a) A summary of additional information that is not contained in the reports of the Secretary-General should, if necessary, be included in the introductory section of the reports;

(b) The discussion section should reflect views expressed in a precise and objective manner. A copy of the interventions made may be provided to the coordinators;

(c) Conclusions and recommendations should be precise, action-oriented and concrete.

361. The discussion section of the report is of particular importance when the Committee is not in a position to reach consensus on the conclusions and recommendations. In such a case, the discussion section should accurately reflect the Committee's deliberations and

should contain its explorations and assessments of the reports of the Secretary-General to help the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for better understanding.

Conclusions and recommendations

362. The role of the Committee in all aspects of its mandate should be strengthened.

363. The Committee stressed that the secretariat should submit necessary documentation on time and in accordance with the six-week rule. Their format should be in accordance with paragraphs 24 and 25 of General Assembly resolution 52/214.

364. The reports of the Secretary-General should conform to the mandates approved by relevant intergovernmental bodies, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, the terms of reference of the Committee and relevant resolutions.

365. In the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, or in the case of its new draft, legislative mandates should be indicated with each new proposal in the form of footnotes.

366. The discussion section of the reports of the Committee should reflect accurately and objectively the discussion that took place at the meetings. It should not have enumerators such as "one, some or many delegations".

367. The Committee should focus more on the conclusions and recommendations of its reports, which should be precise, action-oriented and concrete. Consideration of its draft reports should start from the conclusions and recommendations section.

368. Observers should be given a full opportunity to participate in meetings of the Committee in the deliberations on any matter of particular concern to them, in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure.

369. The Committee recommended that the secretariat of the Committee be responsible for the timely submission of all documentation and that it monitor the progress of preparation of documentation, submitting a detailed report to the Committee at the start of the session. The secretariat of the Committee should also convey the Committee's conclusions and recommendations, as approved by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, to the relevant departments of the Secretariat.

370. The Committee decided to continue consideration of this agenda item.

Chapter VI

Consideration of the provisional agenda for the thirty-ninth session of the Committee

371. In pursuance of paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 34/50 of 23 November 1979, the Committee shall submit to the Council and to the Assembly for their review, the provisional agenda for its thirty-ninth session, together with the required documentation.

372. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008 LX of 14 May 1976, the thirty-ninth session of the Committee shall be of four weeks' duration.

373. At its 23rd meeting, on 26 June 1998, the Committee considered the provisional agenda and documentation for the thirty-ninth session on the basis of a note by the Secretariat (E/AC.51/1998/L.6).

374. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to submit to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, for their review, the following provisional agenda for its thirty-ninth session:

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

3. Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.

   Documentation:

   Report of the Secretary-General on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 45/254 A, para. 17 and E/AC.51/1998/L.7, para. 4)

4. Programme questions:

   (a) Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001;

   Documentation:

   Report of the Secretary-General on proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (in fascicle form)

   (b) Evaluation.

   Documentation:

   Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the Disarmament programme (A/52/16, para. 306)

   Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the Electoral assistance programme (A/52/16, para. 306)

   Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of the Department of Public Information (A/51/16 (Part I))

   Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: termination phase (A/51/16 (Part I))

5. Coordination questions:

   (a) Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

   Documentation:

   Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1998

(b) Implementation of the Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Documentation:

Progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (E/AC.51/1998/L.7/Add.28, para. 23)

6. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

7. Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate (E/AC.51/1998/L.7/Add.30).

8. Provisional agenda for the fortieth session.

9. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-ninth session.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), annex, resolution 19/1, annex.

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 48*, para. 44.

[3] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 16*, paras. 333 and 335.

[4] Ibid., paras. 356 and 357.

[5] Ibid., *Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 48* (A/51/48), para. 7.

[6] Ibid., *Supplement No. 45* (A/51/45), annex.

Annex I

Agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Committee

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations: outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.
4. Programme questions:
   (a) Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997;
   (b) Revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001;
   (c) Proposed revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation;
   (d) New programme narrative for section 7A, Economic and social affairs, and section 26, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999;
   (e) Evaluation.
5. Coordination questions:
   (a) Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination;
   (b) Progress report on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996–2001;
   (c) United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.
6. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit: United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates.
7. Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate.
8. Provisional agenda for the thirty-ninth session.
9. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-eighth session.

Annex II

List of documents before the Committee at the first part of its thirty-eighth session

A/51/946	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates
A/52/685	Comments of the Secretary-General on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates
A/53/6 (in fascicle form)	Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001
A/53/6 (Prog.1)	Political affairs
A/53/6 (Prog.2)	Peacekeeping operations
A/53/6 (Prog.3)	Peaceful uses of outer space
A/53/6 (Prog.5)	Policy coordination and sustainable development
A/53/6 (Prog.7)	Economic and social information and policy analysis
A/53/6 (Prog.8)	Development support and management services
A/53/6 (Prog.13)	International drug control
A/53/6 (Prog.14)	Economic and social development in Africa
A/53/6 (Prog.15)	Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific
A/53/6 (Prog.16)	Economic development in Europe
A/53/6 (Prog.17)	Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean
A/53/6 (Prog.18)	Economic and social development in Western Asia
A/53/6 (Prog.20)	Humanitarian assistance
A/53/6 (Prog.23)	Public information
A/53/6 (Prog.24)	Management and central support services
A/53/6 (Prog.26)	Disarmament
A/53/6 (Prog.27)	General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference services
A/53/6 (Prog.28)	Economic and social affairs
A/53/90	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives
A/53/122 and Add.1	Report of the Secretary-General on programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997

A/53/133	Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation
A/53/134	Report of the Secretary-General on priority setting within the medium-term plan
E/1998/10	Note by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the revised system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women 1996–2001
E/1998/21	Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1997
E/AC.51/1998/1	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
E/AC.51/1998/2	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the international drug control programme
E/AC.51/1998/3	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme
E/AC.51/1998/4 and Corr.1	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: start-up phase
E/AC.51/1998/5 and Corr.1	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of the programme on environment
E/AC.51/1998/6 (Sect.7A)	Report of the Secretary-General on the new narrative for section 7A, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999
E/AC.51/1998/6 (Sect.26)	Report of the Secretary-General on the new narrative for section 26, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999
E/AC.51/1998/7	Progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
E/AC.51/1998/8	Letter dated 27 April 1998 from the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Chairperson of the Committee for Programme and Coordination
E/CN.6/1998/3	Report of the Secretary-General on the mid-term review of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996–2001

E/AC.51/1998/L.1 and Rev.1	Note by the Secretariat on the status of documentation for the thirty-eighth session
E/AC.51/1998/L.2	Note by the Secretariat on the current notional costs of documentation and the utilization of interpretation services
E/AC.51/1998/L.3	Note by the Secretariat on the list of Joint Inspection Unit reports
E/AC.51/1998/L.4	Note by the Secretariat on the adoption of the agenda and organization of work
E/AC.51/1998/L.5	Note by the Secretariat on the programme of work
E/AC.51/1998/L.6	Note by the Secretariat on the draft provisional agenda for the thirty-ninth session
E/AC.51/1998/L.7 and Add.1-30	Draft report of the Committee on the first part of its thirty-eighth session
E/AC.51/1998/INF/1 and Add.1 and Corr.1	List of delegations